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editorial

MY DOGS OF WAR

A few days ago, “The Road Warrior” came into rotation on one of the cable movie channels. I sat down to watch it for the, I don’t know, hundredth time. It’s a great film, one of my favorites.

It’s a great film that was made in 1981, a full 30 years ago. I remember going to a theater in Edgewater, New Jersey, to see “The Road Warrior” in its first release. It made a hell of an impression on me at the time. As it continues to now.

In 1981, “The Road Warrior” offered a window into a dusty new cinematic world—a raw vision of punk-flavored cowboys and Indians played out against the atomic wasteland of a future gone sour. I’d never seen anything like it before. I had no exposure to Australian movies then, either, so its Australian-ness gave it an extra exotic layer. Well, maybe not exotic. Strange.

The way it impresses me now is completely different. It looks naive, and not just because 30 years have passed and Mel Gibson is an old man instead of a young buck. It looks naive because of the tattoos. There are none.

Sure, there might be one or two real ones peeking out of some stuntman’s sleeve, but as far as the movie goes, there’s nothing. And with the lens of time firmly in place, it looks really silly.

Here are two gangs in the barren wasteland after the atomic apocalypse. The guys in the figurative black hats, literally black mohawks, are running around in homo-erotic leather stuff, assless chaps and whatnot. You’d think that the merciless broiling sun would be a burn hazard. Both sides, since the fall of civilization, are reduced to crossbows and boomerangs for weapons with a few exceptions. The good guys—the blond folks in the white outfits that fully cover their asses—have a flame thrower for additional home defense. Mad Max has a double-barreled shotgun with a significant lack of shells, and The Humungous has a big revolver with maybe a dozen rounds of ammo. The lanky weirdo has a gyrocopter; Max drives the last of the V-8 Interceptors.

And throughout it all, no tattoos. What is it that the

non-believers throw at tattoos? You’ll regret it when you’re older, right? How would that translate here—you’ll regret it while you’re being ground into hamburger chasing Mad Max while carrying out the orders of the Lord Humungous, Ruler of the Wasteland, the Ayatollah of Rock and Rollah. Not likely.

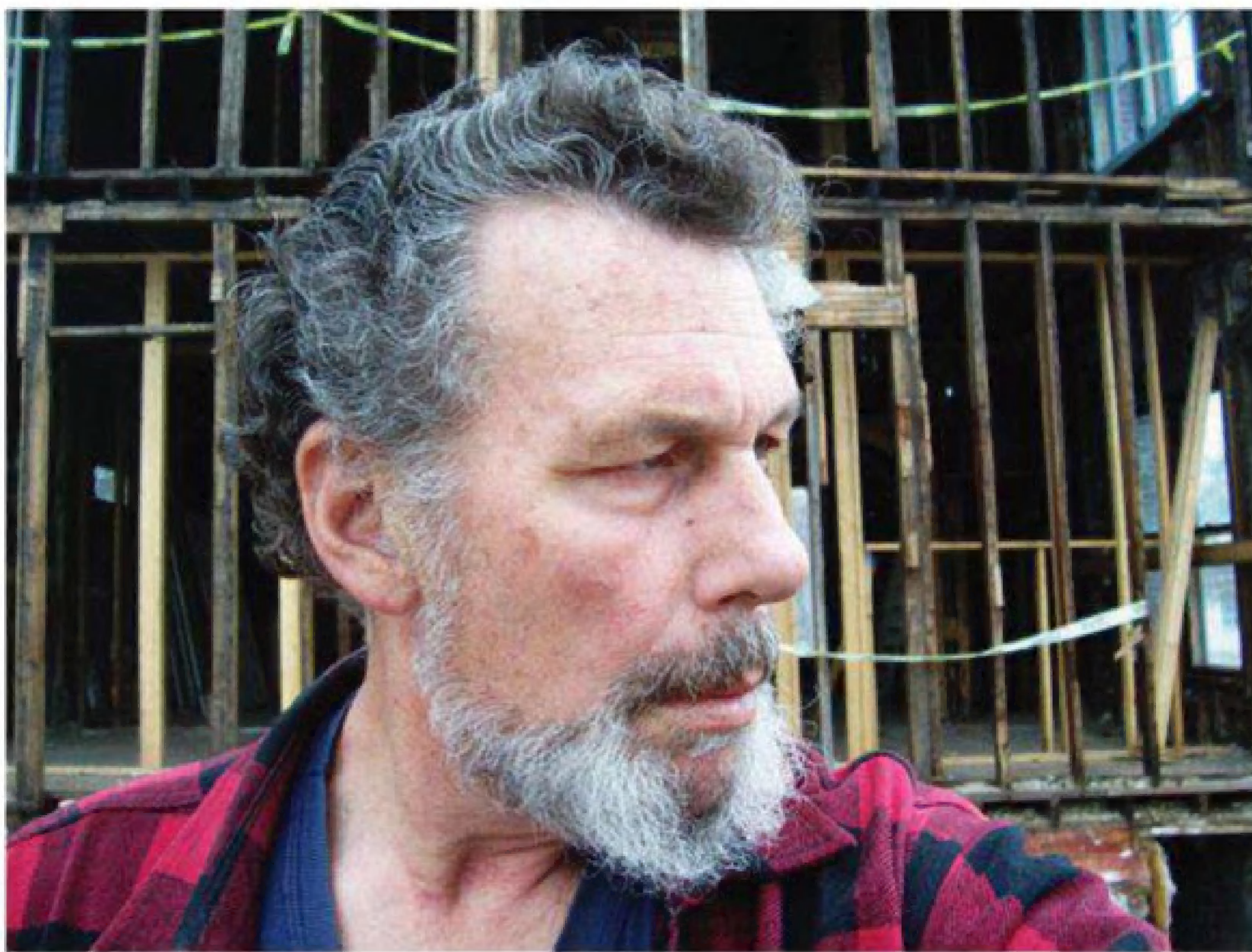
Try and imagine what “The Road Warrior” would look like today. Instead of the leather mask, The Lord Humungous might have a moko, borrowed from Australia’s Southern neighbor. And while the mohawks looked way hip in ’81, The Lord Humungous’ men would

probably have shaved heads and be tattooed top to bottom instead. Max would be sleeved almost for sure and might have an image of his old badge on his chest. The flyer with the bad teeth might show viewers a dorsal gallery of aviation ink—wings, at least. Whichever way the art went, tattooing would be prominent enough to carry the weight of a character on its own. Instead, there’s nothing but a huge vacancy sign.

This is how completely tattooing has taken over—and how fast. Thirty years from absolutely zero in a movie that was almost tailor-made for ink to where we are today: world domination. In the case of Mad Max, by the pathetic third installment, “Beyond Thunderdome” (1985), the casting people had at least found Angry Anderson, the fully sleeved lead singer from Rose Tattoo. He played one of Tina Turner’s henchmen. Tattoos at last. Too little too late, but at least they made the effort.



—Chris Pfouts
Editor



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letters to the editor

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—Kasimir Malevich

IT TAKES A SPECIAL TALENT

Hi. I was just wondering if the artwork that you are talking about sending in, does it have to be a tattoo? Can it be just artwork? I am an artist and I would like to get my artwork out there in the tattoo world. I got some tattooing stuff and basically have just tattooed my own body and I found out that just because you can draw does not mean you can tattoo. It definitely takes a special talent to put artwork on one's body! I have much respect for tattoo artists.

--Lynne Evaro

Via e-mail

We have featured non-tattoo artists many times in the past, but none recently. So yes, feel free to submit non-tattoo art—but we really prefer that it have at least some relation to tattooing.

ARE WE FOR REAL?

I would really like a chance to show off my work. But I come from a very small community in Wyoming—is it true you look at every picture that gets sent to you or do I just become lost in the mail?

--Heather

You're kidding, right? We get mail from

all over the world, and we don't give a hang about anything but the quality of the tattoos in the photos and the photos themselves—are they in focus, well lit, etc. Photo quality—focus and lighting—is usually good these days, so we can give our attention to the tattoos themselves. The last thing we care about is the population of the town where the artist lives—in fact it makes absolutely no difference at all.

One thing though—we really love to be the first to publish work by a new talent. And often, new stars in the tattoo sky are found working in small towns. So get with it. Put some pictures in an envelope—with your name and contact information on the back—and get them into the mail. Our address is below and to the right, both.

SUICIDE IS PAINLESS

Just a quick question. I know the Suicide Girls have a Facebook page—is there going to be a page created for this magazine, or is there one already and I don't know where it is. Thanks.

--Kevin Burbulak

Via e-mail

At present we have no plans to include a Suicide Girls page in ITA, but anything is possible.

THE POLISH CONNECTION

Back in the February issue you featured a Polish tattooer named Piotr Olejnik. The guy's work is completely off the chain. I loved it. I have no way to get to Eastern Europe, but damn. I mean Damn, man.

--Al “The Pal” Walker
Cleveland, Ohio

We'll pass that along: Damn.

SELF EXPOSURE

I have a tattoo photo of myself that I would like to submit for your magazine and was wondering where I would send it to? (e-mail) Thanks for your help.

--Matthew Burford
Via e-mail

At present we do not accept e-mailed photos or discs of images. We're limited to actual photographs that arrive in our offices. See below for complete submission guidelines.

NOW AND FOREVER

I've been thinking about how you're doing lately. It's a tragedy going on in

Japan. I was just there last November and even got tattooed. Austin is insane with South by Southwest right now and I may be tattooing some up-and-coming rock stars this weekend. The shop has been super busy, so I have a bunch of new tattoo pictures to send you.

Also, I've been working on some custom painted wood Ouija boards as art projects. I'll start with a theme like "Russian prison tattoo" and replace the yes, no and goodbye with da, nyet and dasvidanya. I'll send you some pictures of those, too.

Hope you are well and healthy.

--Tina Forever
Resurrection Tattoo
Austin, TX

GETTING INTO OUR PAGES

I'm an inked model with a number of credits. I need an e-mail that I can send pictures into for possible magazine submission. Thanks for your time.

--Melissa Jo Collins
Via e-mail

My name is Shell Ann. I'm a tattooed model and I would like to know how to become one of your hot cover models. Can you tell me how? Thanks for your time.

--Shell Ann
Via e-mail

I'm wondering how or if it's possible to be featured as a model in your magazine?

--Shawna Alexis
Via e-mail

We really value your submissions and want to be sure that they get

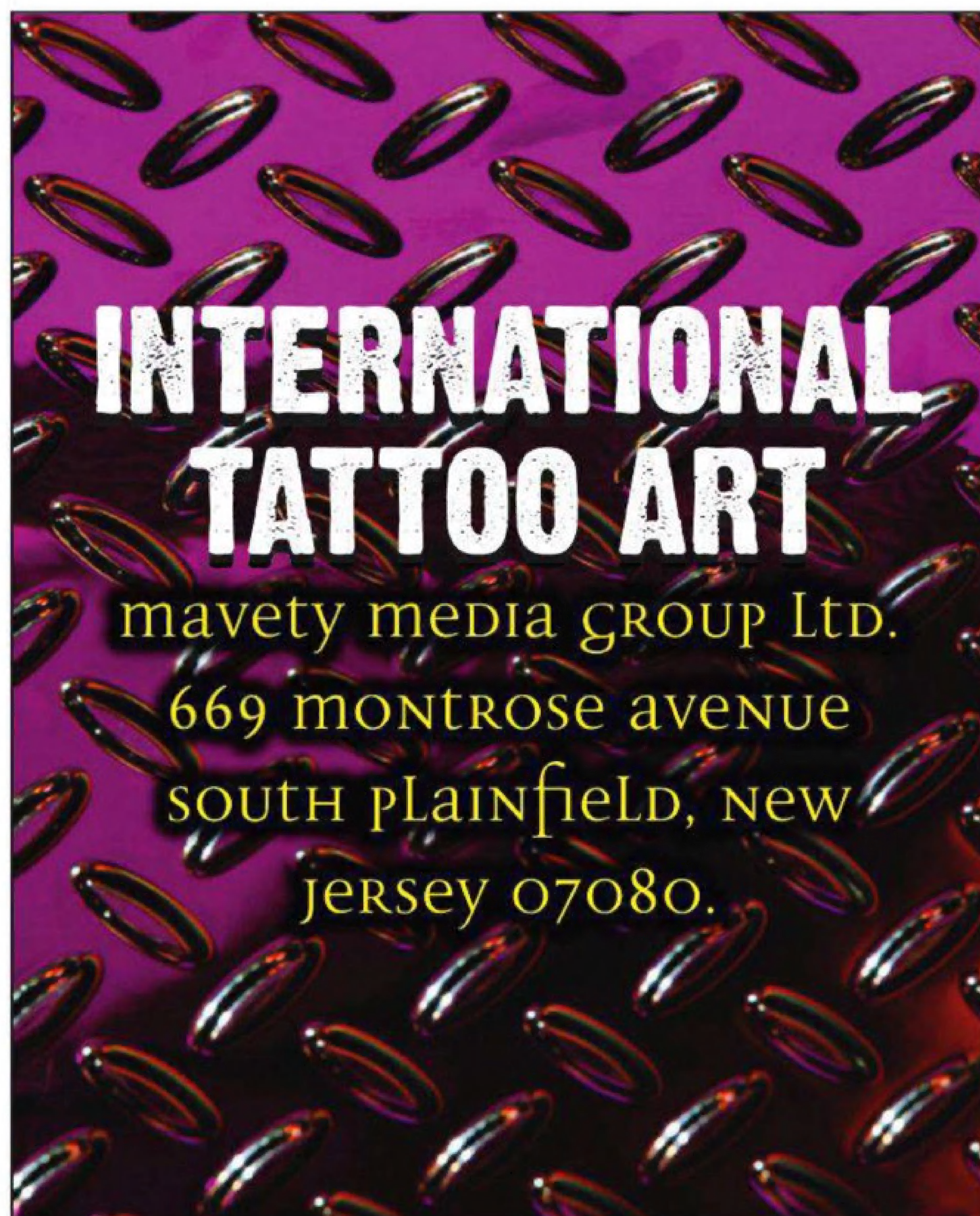
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Be sure that your name, shop name, and address are on the back of EACH PHOTO. A phone number is also helpful. Just throwing a piece of paper with the name on it into the envelope is not sufficient. If you need to be certain that the package arrived, use the U.S. Post Office's Delivery Confirmation system. They attach a green sticker to the item and you can check its status online. Or ship FedEx or UPS. Because of the volume of mail we receive we cannot answer questions about an individual package either by phone or online.

Finally—we ask that you send us exclusive photographs. If you're sending the work to other places at the same time, we'd rather not get it. Our leadtime is long—we work as much as five months ahead of the cover date, so be patient.

Thank you for thinking of INTERNATIONAL TATTOO ART—we couldn't do it without you.



FAMILY AFFAIR



LIFE-CHANGING ART BY

Jess Yen

By Amanda Stephan

Jess Yen, also known as Horiyen, gives special attention to how he represents the world around him in his art, as well as how he presents himself in his day-to-day existence. A practicing Buddhist, Yen strives to be compassionate and is always mindful of karma. He fervently believes that what goes around comes around, that respect and honor given will ultimately result in respect and honor received. Since his initiation into the tattoo universe more than 23 years ago, Horiyen has not only lived by this philosophy, but he has also encouraged many young artists to embrace his respectful and multi-dimensional approach to art and life. He has offered a framework for the tattoo dreams of close to 40 apprentices. A handful of those apprentices have gone on to join the ranks of the Jess Yen Tattoo Family.

Jess Yen was born in Taiwan. His father died in a plane crash when Yen was only a month old. Raised by his grandfather in what he describes as a strict traditional Japanese way, Yen says he and his mother experienced many hardships during his childhood. "I believe this has made me a strong person inside," he said.

Along with an inner strength, Yen has a large supply of creative energy. At an early age, he demonstrated an enthusiasm and aptitude for art. He enjoyed drawing and creating using a variety of mediums, including acrylic, oil, markers, watercolors, charcoal, and pencil. To encourage this artistic exploration, Yen's mother enrolled him in an art and technical high school in Taipei.



When he was 13, Horiyen added tattooing to his repertoire of mediums. He used a bamboo stick and a needle to tattoo a Kanji character on a classmate's arm. "I learned the technique of hand-poke tattooing by watching other tattooists and trying it out myself," he said. "When I picked up the needle tying into a bamboo stick and started tattooing, it was like déjà vu. It seems like I was a tattoo artist in a previous life, and this was in my memory. This did not mean that I was already good at that time. It took many years of work and trying out different tools, needle-making, inks and techniques."

Although he felt this connection to tattooing and appreciated it as a unique form of expression, Horiyen did not initially consider making a living as a tattooist. "I always believed that I was destined to do some great things," he said. "However, I never thought that I would have done it through tattooing."

Instead, Yen entered college and continued his study of the arts. He paid particular attention to the work of artists like Ito Hikozeu, a great Japanese artist who specialized in portraying characters and heroes of the Suikoden. "The vigorous facial





changes and movement of each character inspired me," he said. "Another great artist is Horiyoshi III. He is my idol since I was a teenager. I still remember looking at his picture on the wall when I was tattooed back in Taiwan. Finally, my big brother, Jack Mosher, aka Horimouja, is also a great artist. He taught many great techniques in sketching and portraying." Over the years, Yen's inspirations have also included Hwa San Chiuen, Nagano Tsuyoshi, Shimura Tatsumi, and Rob Gonsalves.


After Horiyen earned his bachelor's degree, he spent several years working with a Japanese interior designer. This experience added a whole new dimension to his art. Together with his teacher, Yen worked on numerous urban projects, as well as some celebrity homes. "During my few years working with the Japanese interior designer, I worked a lot with marker, and it became my specialty and one of my favorite mediums," he explained. "As an interior designer in Taiwan, the work hours were very long. I spent a lot of time studying perspective and creating different types of materials and textures, such as metal, fabric, water, wood and their reflections and contrast. These skills became great assets to me in tattooing."

Horiyen's shift from interior design to tattooing came after he ventured over to the United States. Initially, the purpose for his travels was to earn a master's degree in Fine Arts from a graduate school in New York. "Unfortunately, my mom back in Taiwan had experienced a financial difficulty, so I was not able to complete the program," he said. Yen then traveled to Southern California for a language program at UC Irvine. To earn an income while he studied, Horiyen

divided his time working as an art teacher and a bartender. "As a poor artist, I knew I would have to find a way to survive," he said. "In a fortuitous way, I visited a tattoo parlor in Venice Beach with my friends. That was my first time to see an electrical tattoo machine and I was amazed by its speed. I decided to combine my hand-poked tattoo skill with an advantage of an electrical machine to make a living."

During the early stages of Horiyen's tattoo career, he worked out of his garage. Eventually Yen was offered a spot by a local shop owner. Horiyen accepted his invitation and eventually he purchased that shop in Alhambra, Calif., and made it his own studio, My Tattoo. It has been almost 23 years since Horiyen did that first Kanji character on his classmate, but he considers the beginning of his professional career to be 16 years ago in California when he discovered the possibilities associated with being a tattoo artist.

Horiyen continues to awaken his special blend of tattoo awareness in his apprentices and colleagues. "I am especially proud of members of Jess Yen Tattoo Family," he said. "They all have 'Horiyen' emblem tattooed on different parts of their bodies. This symbolizes their life commitment to a tattoo career and our tattoo family. My training process is harsh, and they all work very hard to earn the family name, so I am very grateful to my students who have helped me to make it so far together. My biggest reward is to see each becoming an independent and respectful artist who finds his/her own specialty and builds his/her own clientele."

Contact Jess Yen on the Web at www.mytats.com. 

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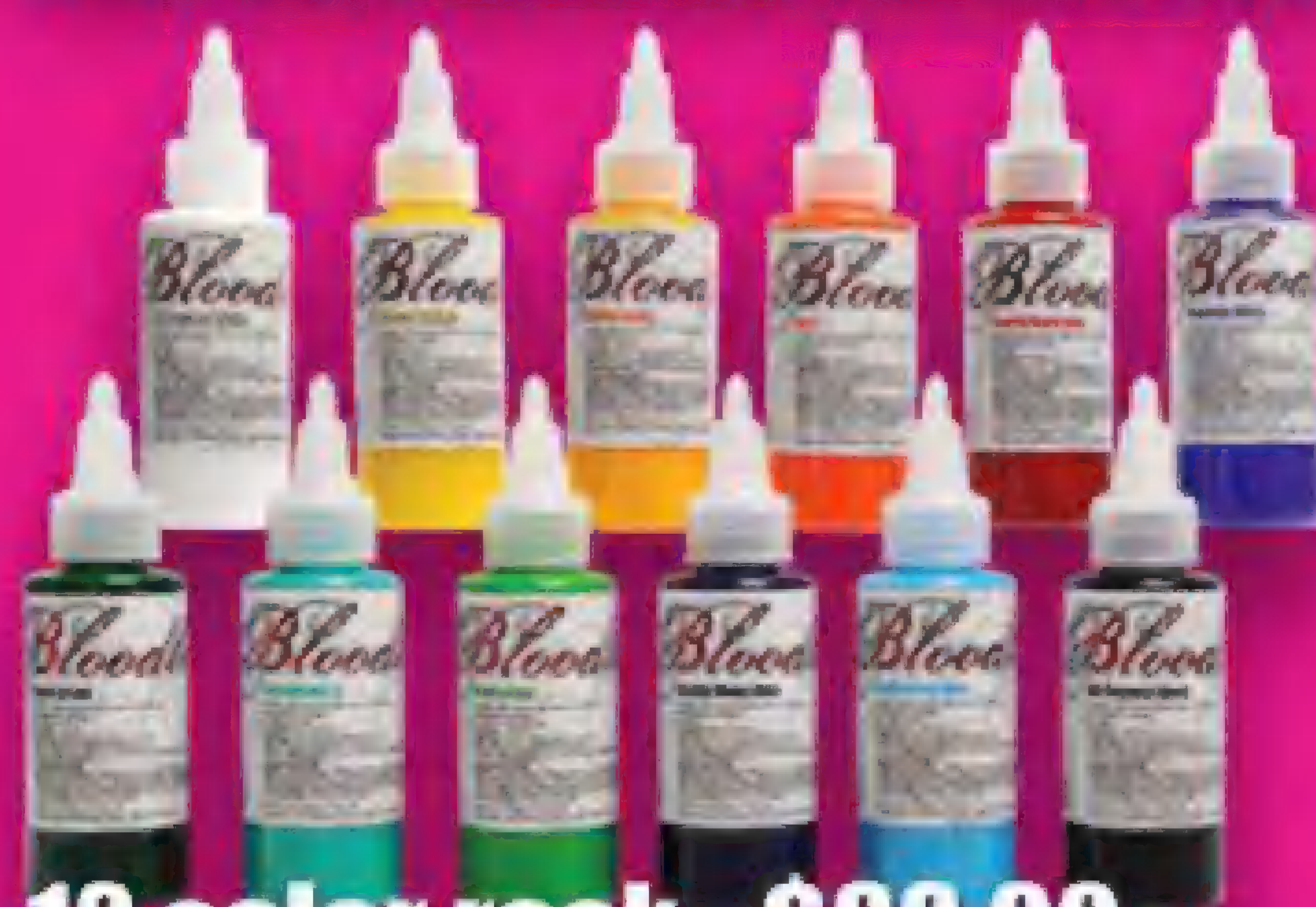
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FIRST TO ARRIVE, LAST TO LEAVE



Philadelphia Tattoo Arts Convention



Photos by Bill DeMichele Story by Shannon

The year had just been kick-started and before you knew it March was marching to its finish.

Over the weekend of March 26-28, the Philly Tattoo Convention, under its official moniker of the Philadelphia Tattoo Arts Convention was rolling on wheels of fire at the Sheraton Philadelphia City Center Hotel.

Entertainment is always abundant, provided to an inked public by host Troy Timple. The weekend included live bands, live suspension acts, burlesque shows, tattoo contests, an art gallery, and, to top it all off, a visitation by the one and only Enigma.

Donnie Kizzee, Krooked Ken, Jonathan Lewis, David Bell, Nicola Bell, Chris Bucher, Justin Craven/ Sean Cummings, www.buckwaggs.com



Artists: Unknown

P H I L L Y

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Artist: Troy Tempel



Artist: Kaos

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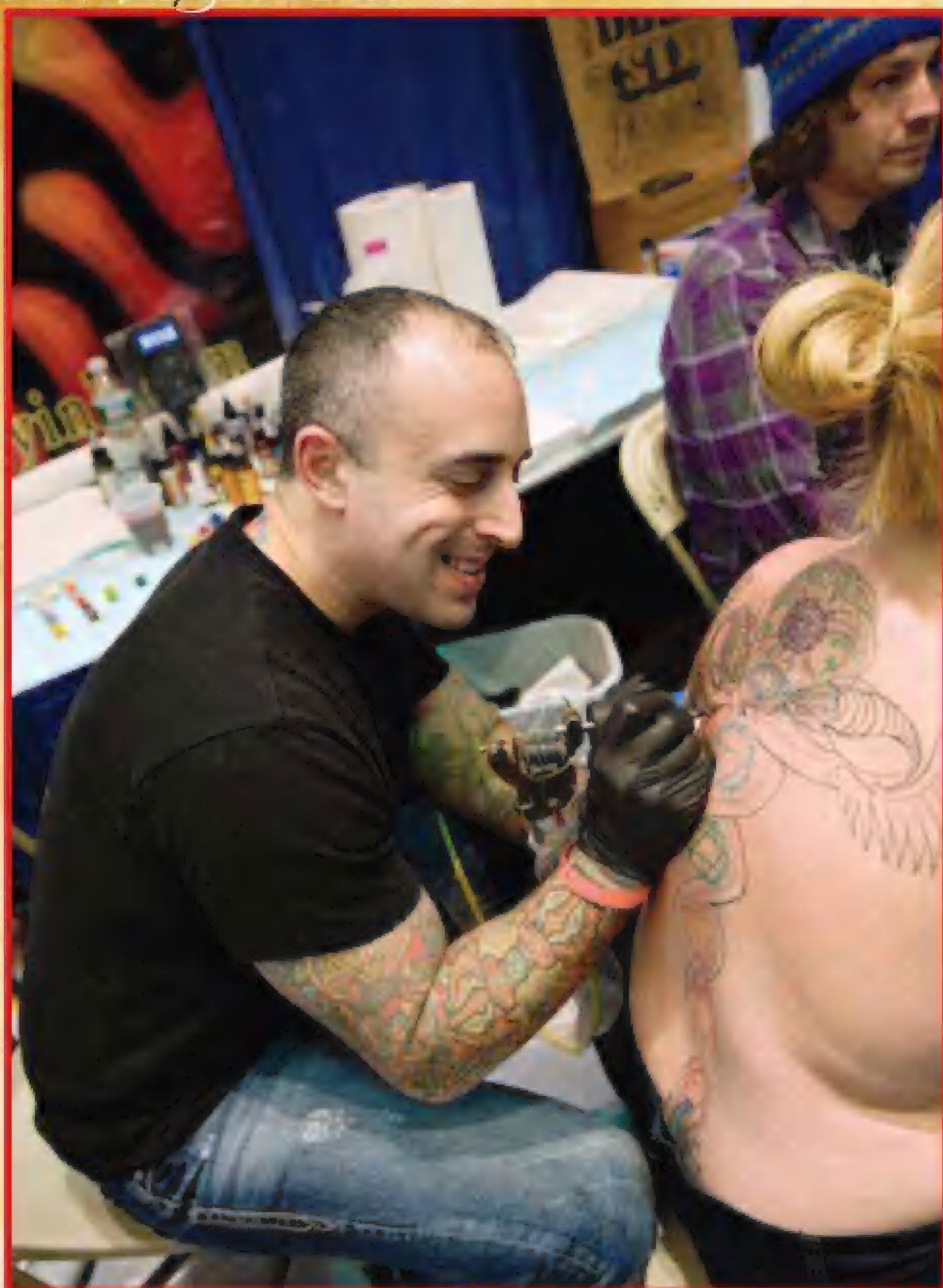
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Artist: Mike V.



Artist: Ken Dean

P H I L A D E L P H I A



Artists: Jsouha Ruff, Mary Franzenberg, Rose Banks, Wade Banks



Artist: Desmond Mooney

P H I L L Y



Artist: Unknown



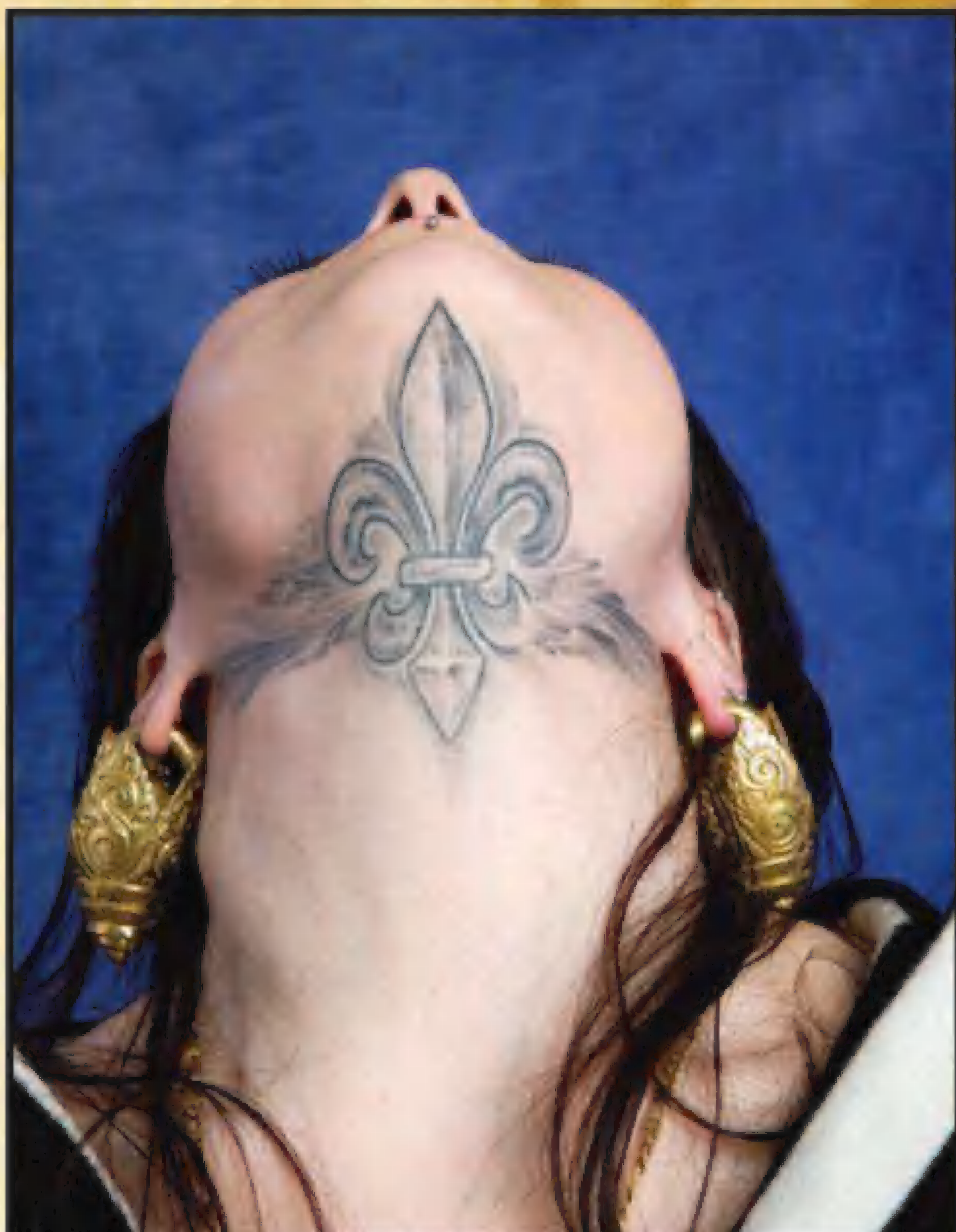
Artists: Jeff Ensminger, Gunnar

P H I L A D E L P H I A



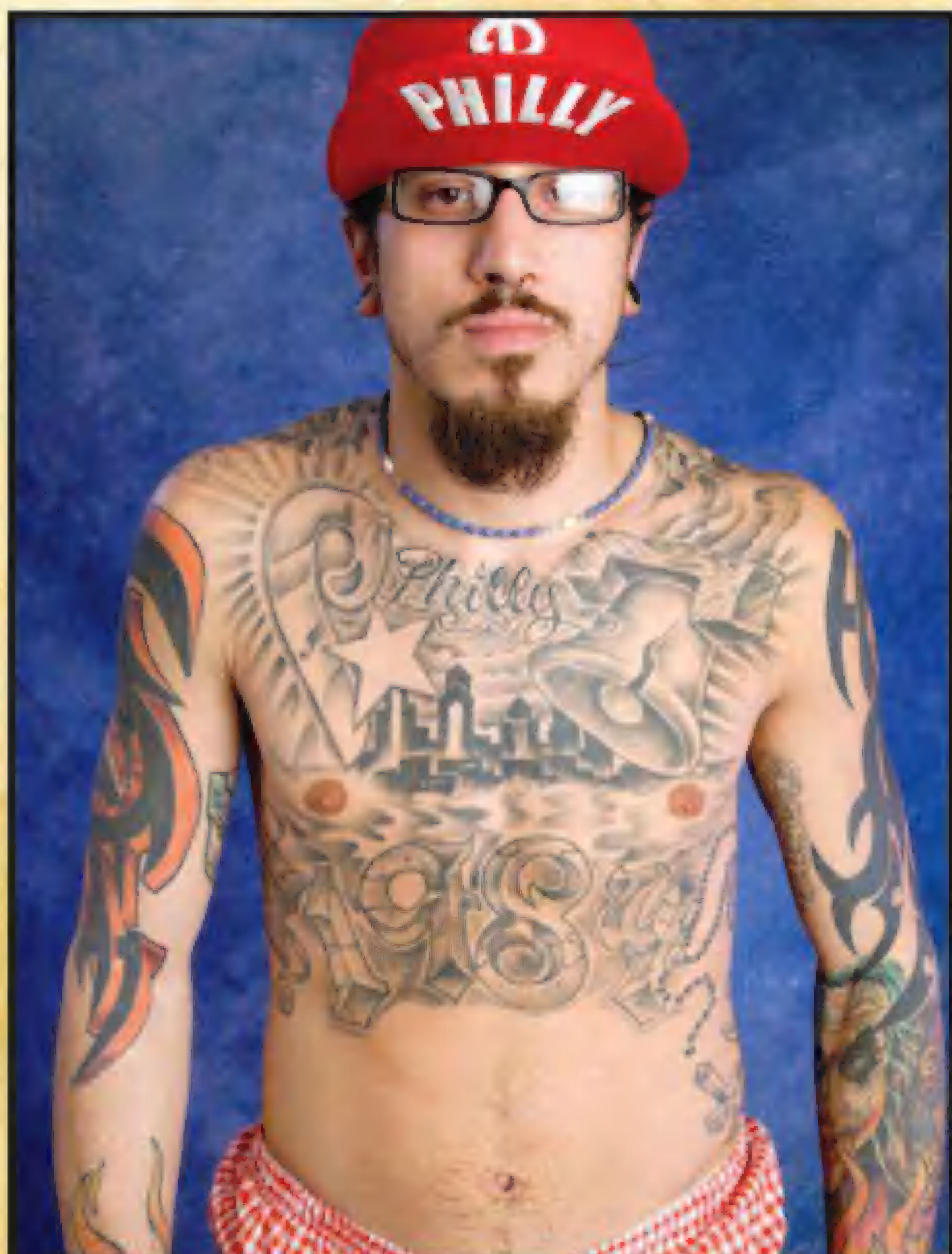


Artist: Unknown

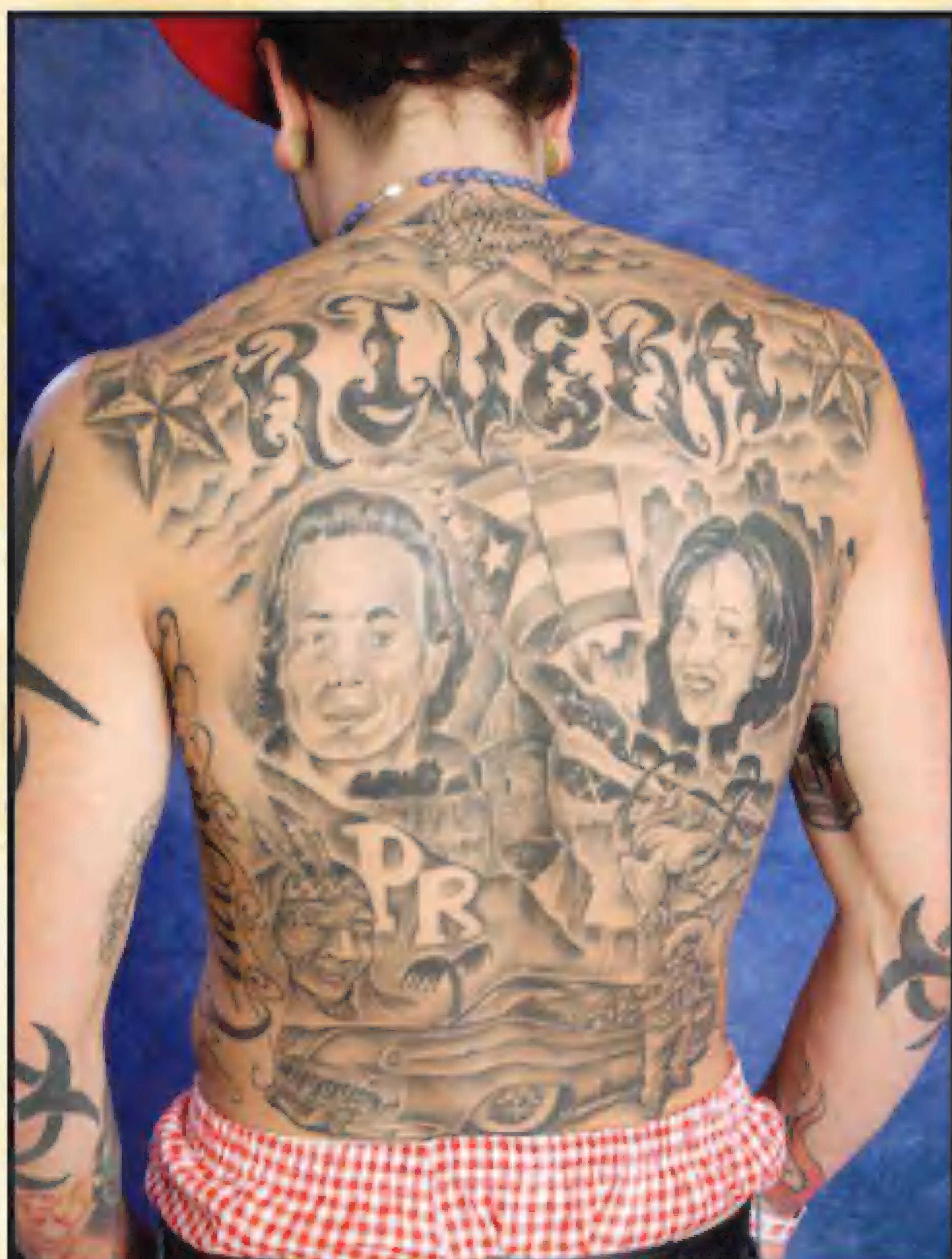


Artist: Brian Brennar

P H I L A D E L P H I A



Artist: José Garcia

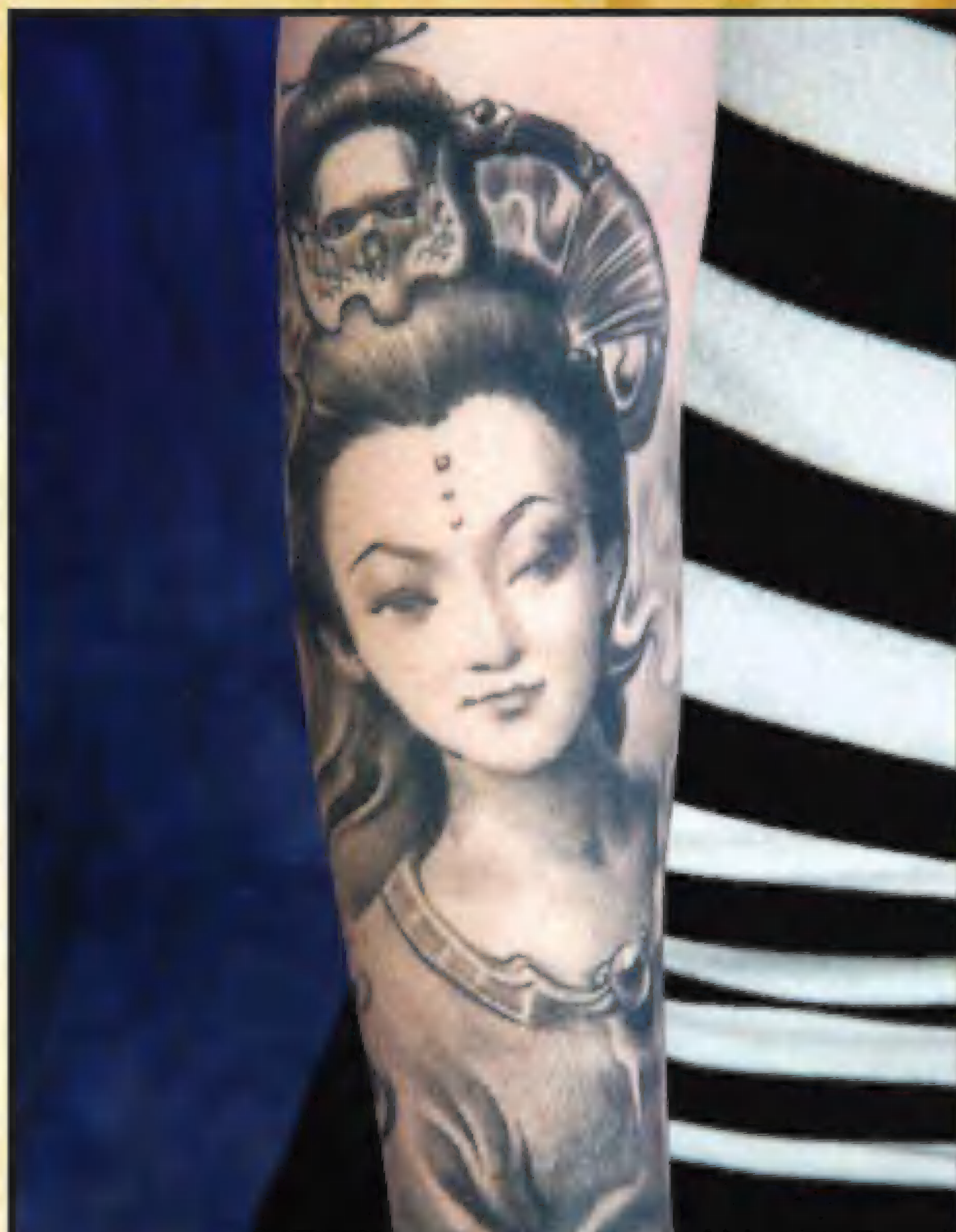


Artist: José Garcia

P H I L L Y



Artist: Dan Marshall



Artist: Little Dragon

P H I L A D E L P H I A



Artist: José Garcia

P H I L L Y



Artist: José Garcia



Artist: Unknown

P H I L A D E L P H I A



Artist: Joe Bruce



Artist: Joe Bruce

P H I L L Y



Artist: Joshua Hagan



Artist: Joshua Hagan

P H I L A D E L P H I A



Artist: Joe Bruce



Artist: Joshua Hagan

P H I L L Y



Artist: Joe Bruce

P H I L A D E L P H I A



Artist: Sarah Miller



Artist: Tim Pangburn

P H I L L Y



Artist: Michael Patrick



Artist: Kelly Gelling

P H I L A D E L P H I A



Artist: Scott Wilgeroth



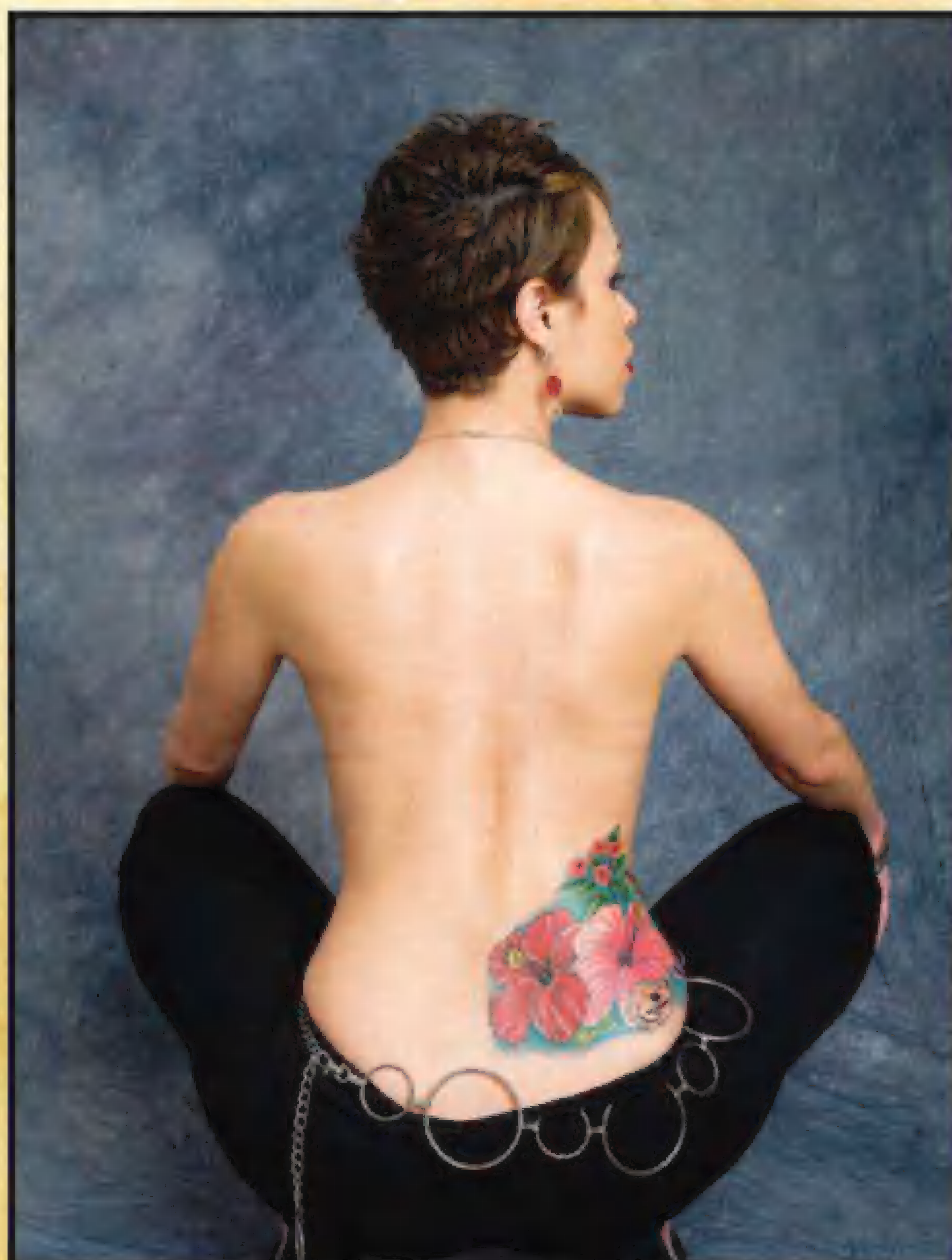


Artist: Scott Wilgeroth



Artist: Scott Wilgeroth

P H I L A D E L P H I A



Artist: Tazz Chucky



Artist: James Vaughn



Artist: Unknown



Artist: Unknown

P H I L A D E L P H I A



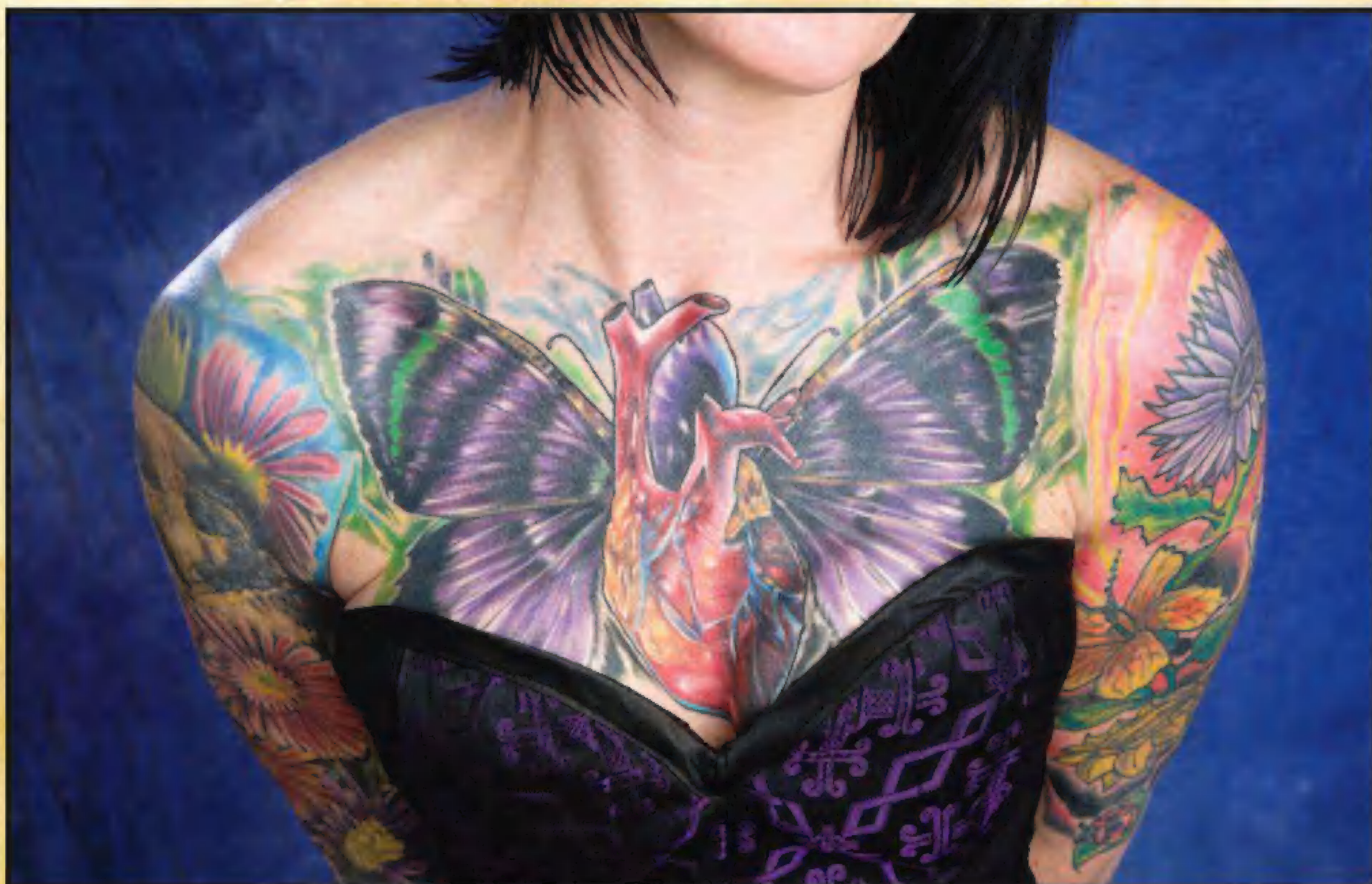
Artist: Brandon Hamilton



Artist: Unknown



P H I L A D E L P H I A



Artist: Kelly Gelling

P H I L L Y



Artist: Jared Stomber



Artist: Jared Stomber

P H I L A D E L P H I A



Artists: Various



Artist: White Trash Matt



Artist: Dave Tedder



Artist: Dave Tedder

P H I L A D E L P H I A



PHILLY



Artist: Joe Zaza



Artist: Halo Jankowski

PHILADELPHIA



Artists: Halo Jankowski, Joe Zaza



Artists: Halo Jankowski, Joe Zaza, Hector Cedillo, Tattoo Ish

P H I L L Y



Artist: Jake Kirk



Artist: Terry Manning

P H I L A D E L P H I A



Artist: Terry Manning



Artist: Terry Manning



Artist: Woodz

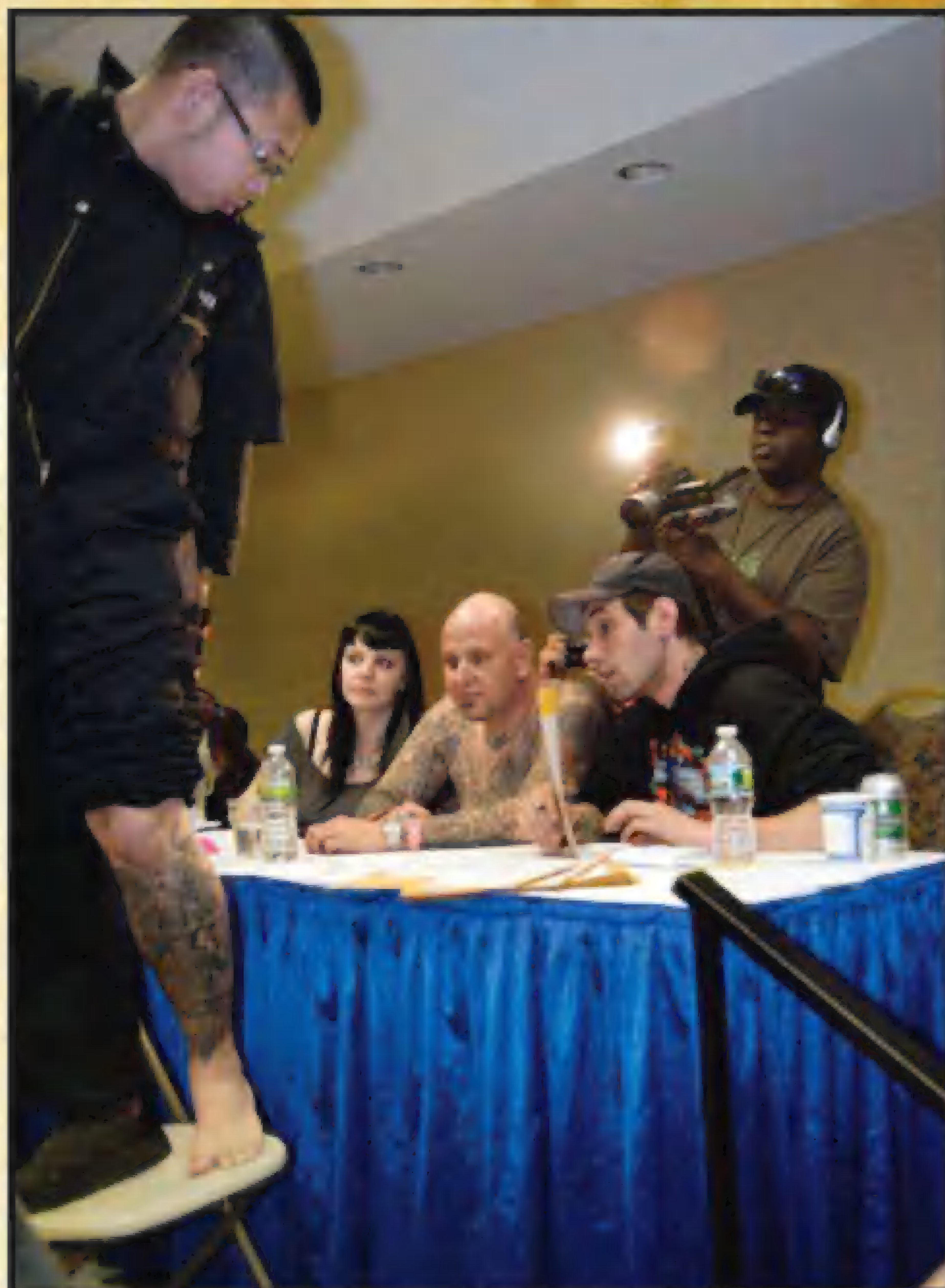
P H I L A D E L P H I A



Artist: Scotty Munster, Jason Doll



Artist: Woodz



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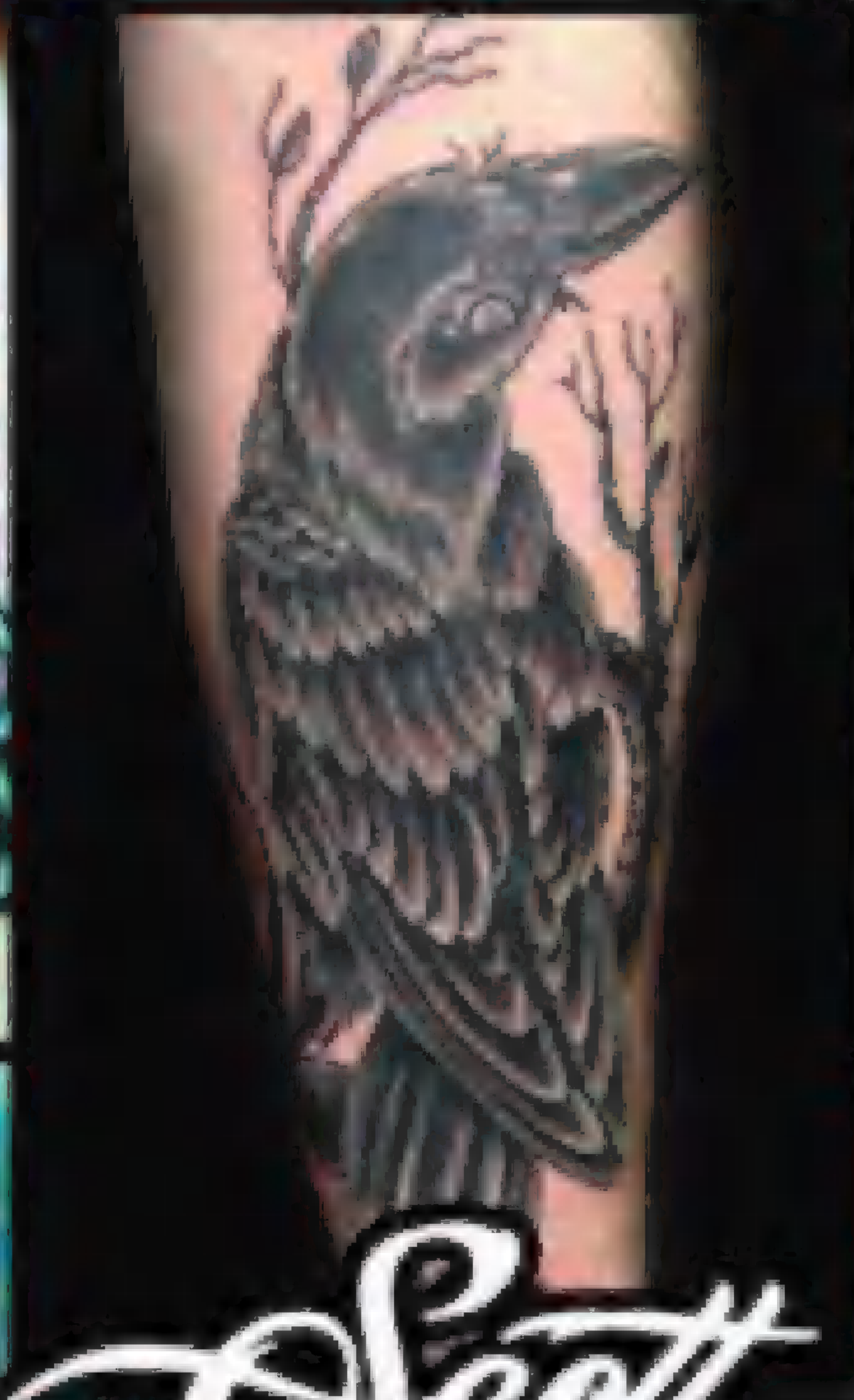
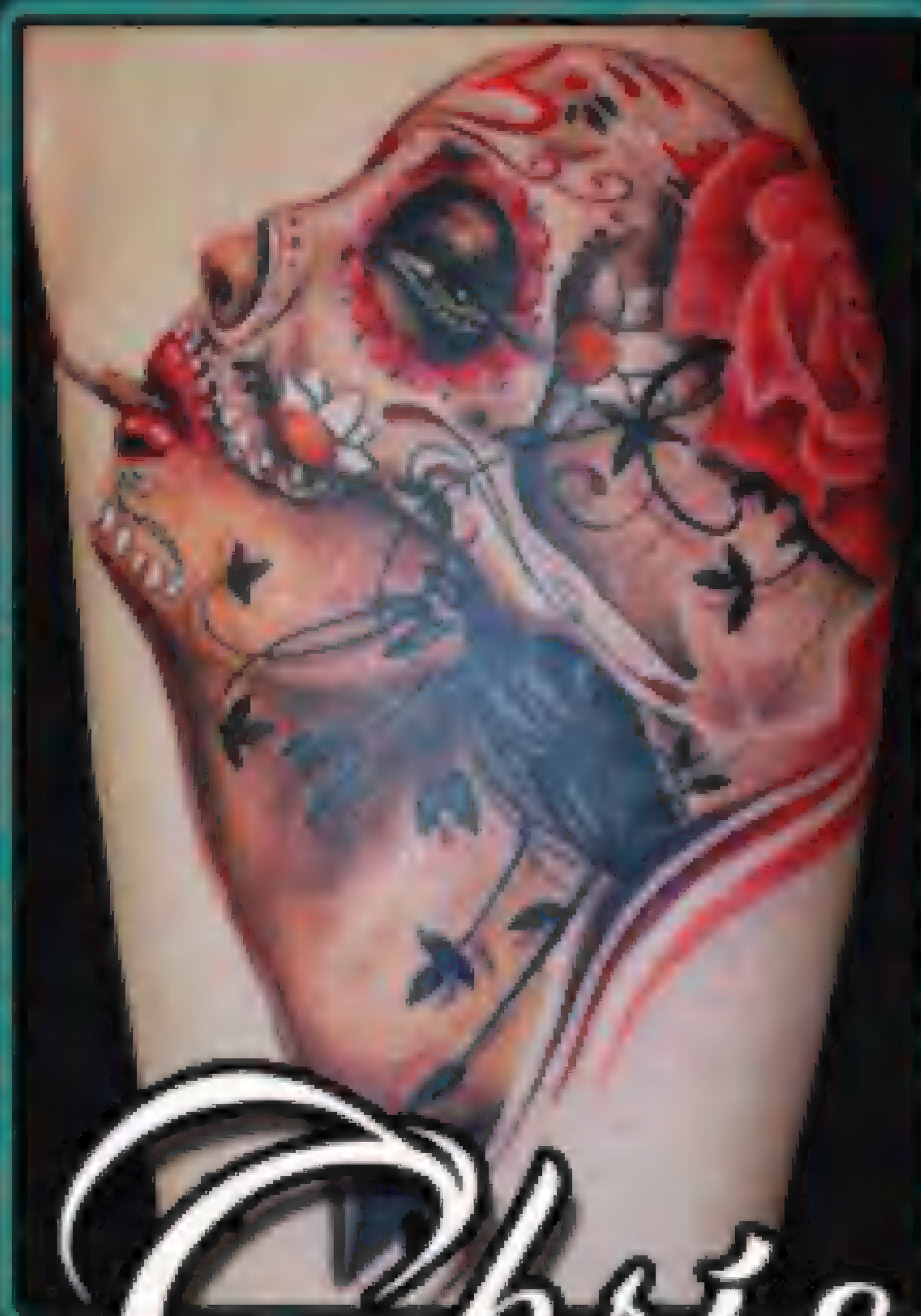
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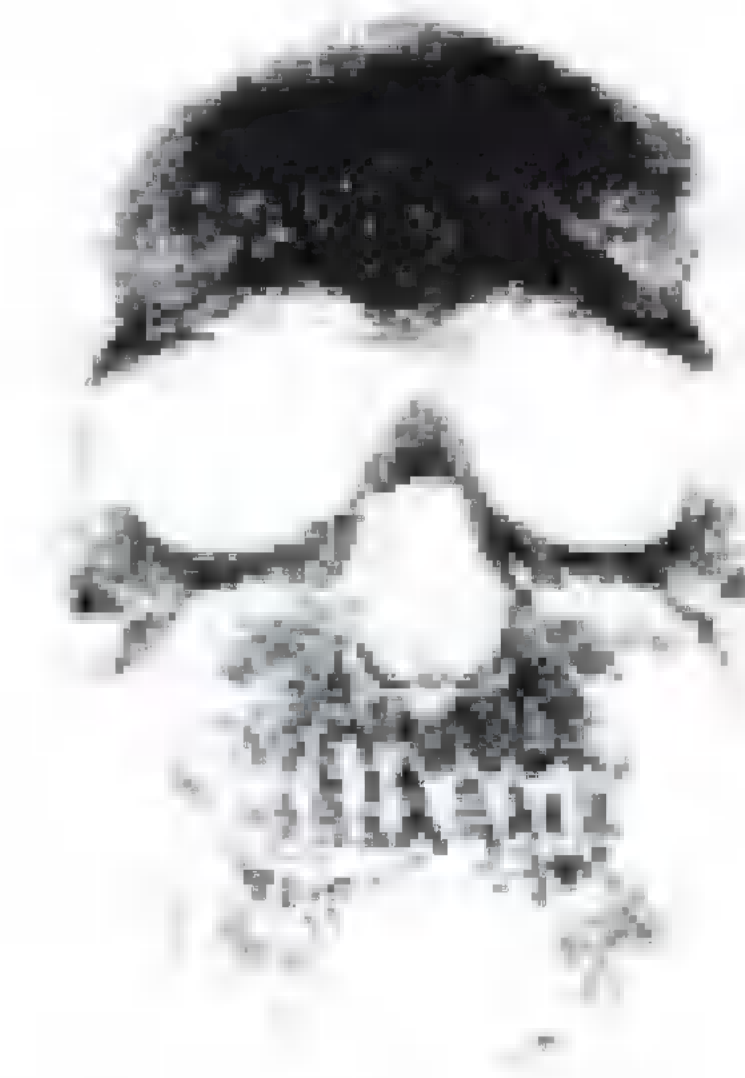
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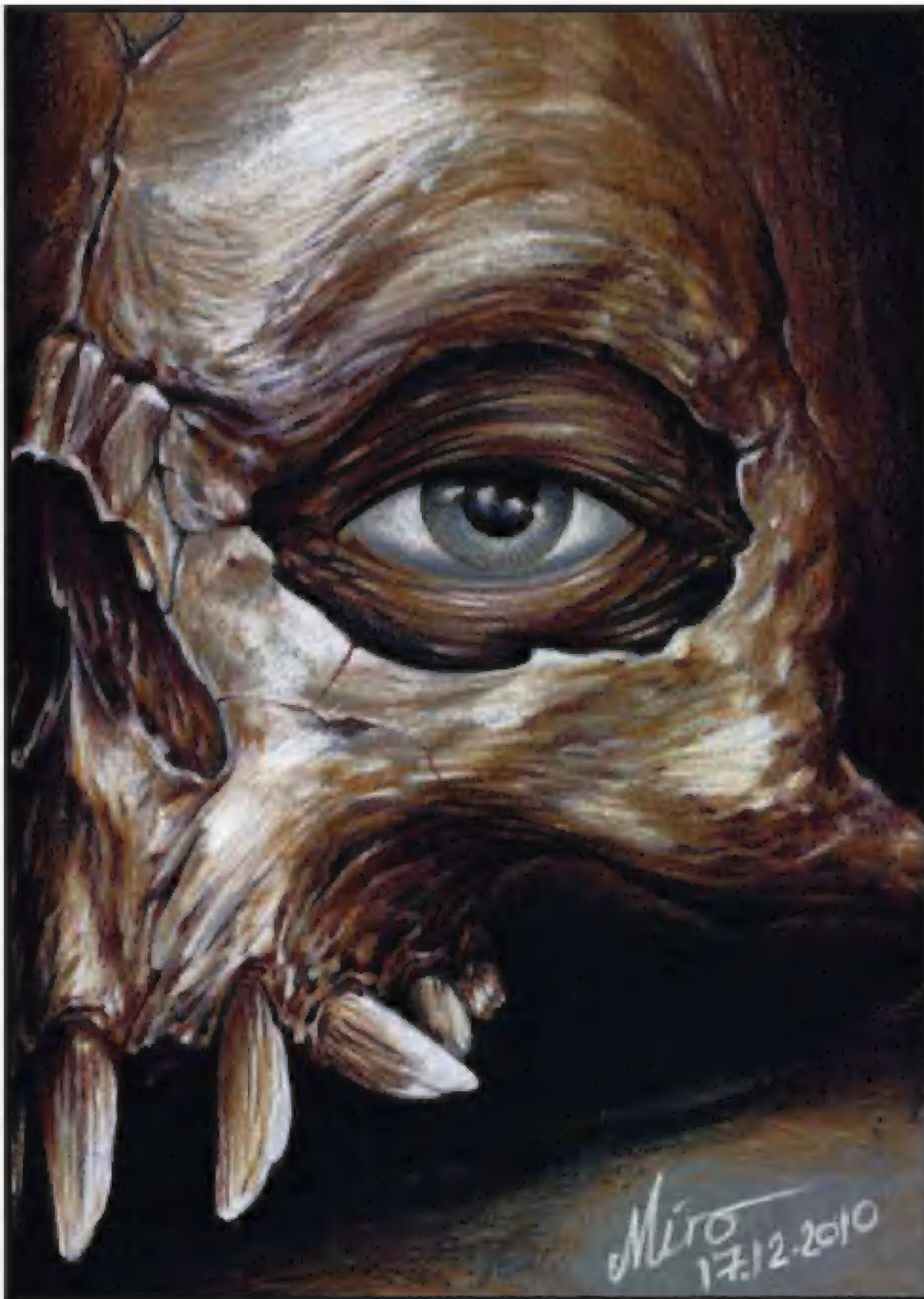
Tattoos by
MIRO

By Amanda Stephan

Around the time that Tomas Miroslav, known as Miro, was entering adulthood and preparing to face the world as a man, his home country was in the throes of a war for independence of its own. Miro was born in Yugoslavia in 1971 and 20 years later, he prepared to flee from the turmoil that would soon become the Yugoslav War. Struggling to determine what he should make of his life, Miro was certain of one thing: he wouldn't find a stable future in Yugoslavia. "In ex-Yugoslavia, there is not much to do except parties and concerts and going out," he said. "I started drawing comics at the age of fifteen years and invented my own characters, but I lived in the wrong country." The outlook for private sector work diminished even further with Yugoslavia on the brink of war. In 1991, Miro migrated to Germany.

Once in Germany, Miro was exposed to a potential career that he had never before considered: tattooing. "In the beginning of the Nineties, I did not know that there are





“CUSTOM OR FREE HAND, I LOVE TATTOOS AND MAKING THEM.”

—Miro

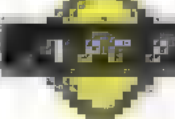
tattoo shops around and didn't even think about that you are able to live from making tattoos,” he recalled. “At this time in Germany there were only a handful of tattoo shops, and most of them in the area where American barracks are. So, of course, most of the customers in Germany were American soldiers. I think it was in April, 1992, when I walked into a magazine store where I found the first tattoo magazine and bought it. I was so excited. I went home and drew all the tattoo pictures out of the magazine.”

Miro began attempting to learn to tattoo immediately. Although he had dabbled in tattooing prior to 1992, he doesn't consider that experimentation “real” tattooing. In April of 1992, however, Miro buckled down and applied himself to learning to tattoo properly. This was no easy feat. “At that time it was all different, no Internet, nobody wants to tell you anything about tattooing because they are afraid of competition,” he said. “Today it's very easy to get information about tattooing.”

Just three years after he applied himself to learning to tattoo, Miro and his wife opened Tomas Tattoo, in Erlangen, Germany. Fortunately, that venture proved to be a fruitful one and Miro continues to devote all of his energy to keeping it so. His daily work at the shop is 90-percent freehand tattoo art. “The rest is custom work with stencil,” he said. “If the customer brings his idea to the shop, I make my own stencil or interpretation of the idea for him, so it is the best way for me to make it more fluid on the body and the result is the best.”

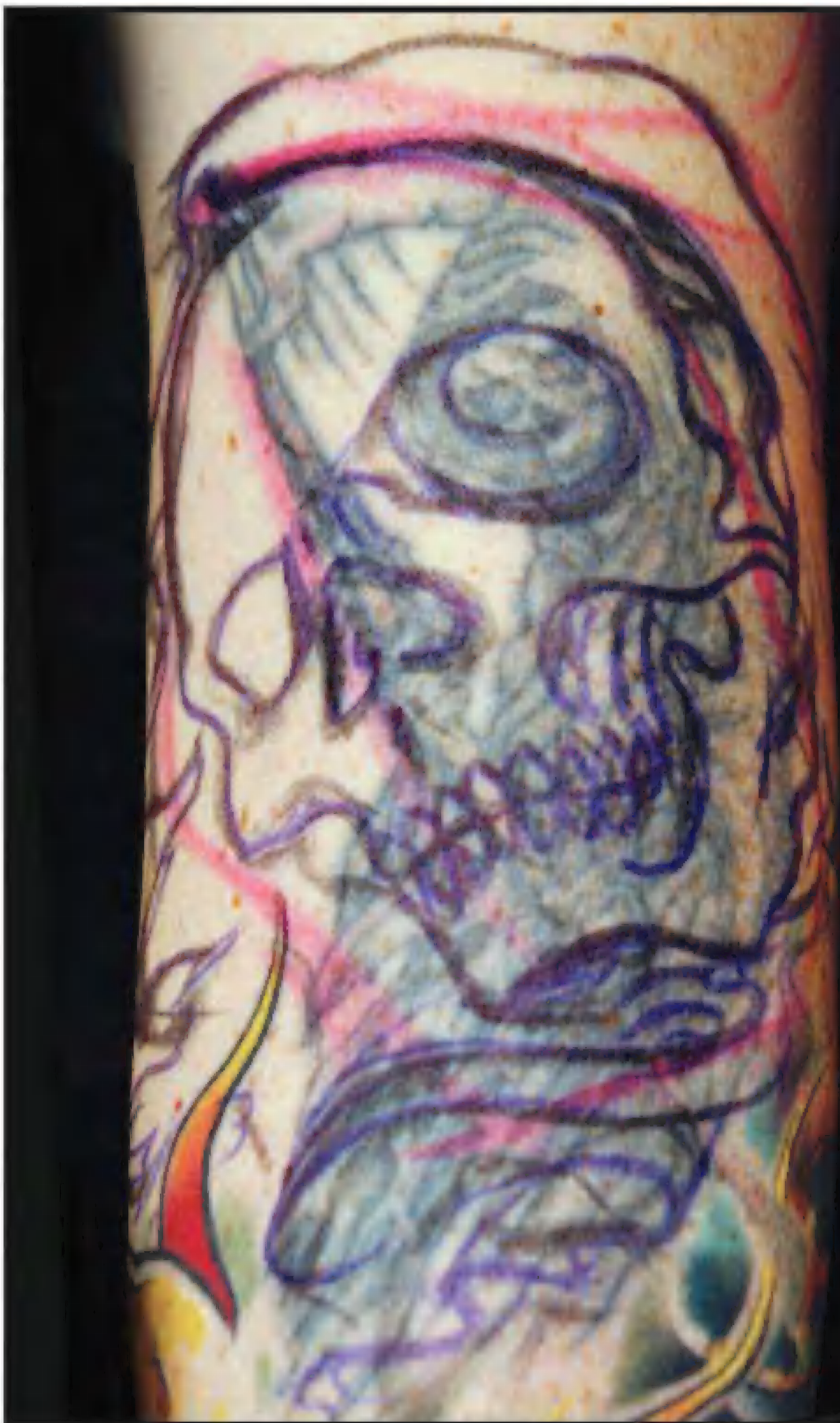
Over the years, Miro has inadvertently earned the reputation as an artist who specializes in skull-themed art, due in part to his long-time fascination with fantastical images, like those in the art of Frank Frazatta, Simon Bisley, and Boris Vallejo. “In Germany,” he said, “I have the reputation of the skull-maker, but some of the clients think now I only make skulls, which is not true. They think I'm not able to do other stuff. They would be surprised if they see a portrait or some old-school tattoo from me, but my preferences are demons, warriors, and skulls.”

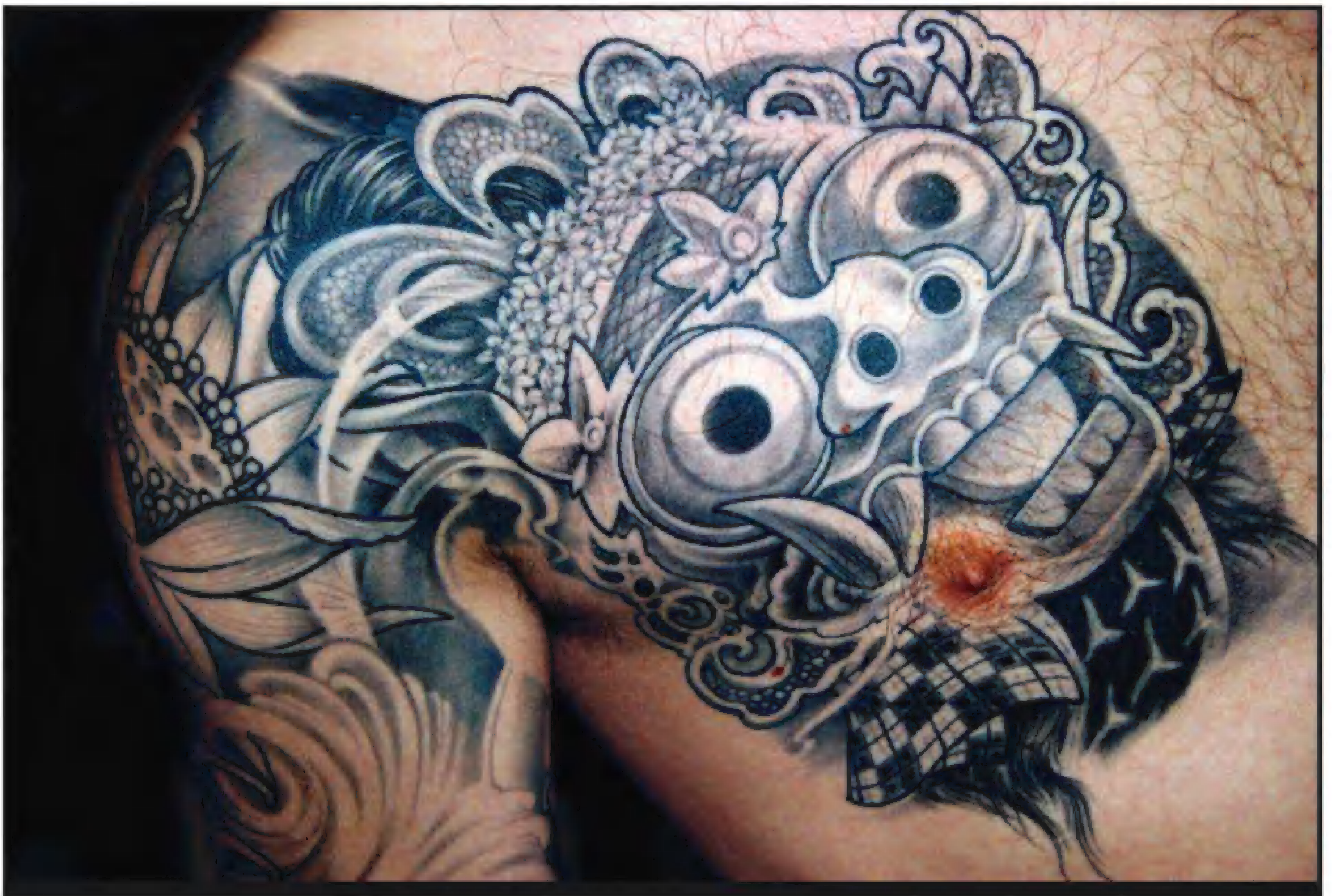
Nevertheless, Miro hopes to avoid classification at all costs. “My personal taste changes from time to time,” he said. “Ten years ago, I did much realistic, but after years of experience, I decided if the skin of the customer is not perfect or the customer is not good about aftercare, the result is not satisfactory.” What never changes is Miro's dedication to making steadfast tattoos. “I think sometimes less is more,” he said. “That means I make a powerful outline and nice solid shading, and I found out that the tattoos look very nice, even ten years later. A tattoo should look good forever, not only for one year. That's the way I try to make tattoos, so I hope they always look good. I normally tattoo everything, from a little flower to a big backpiece. Custom or free hand, I love tattoos and making them.”

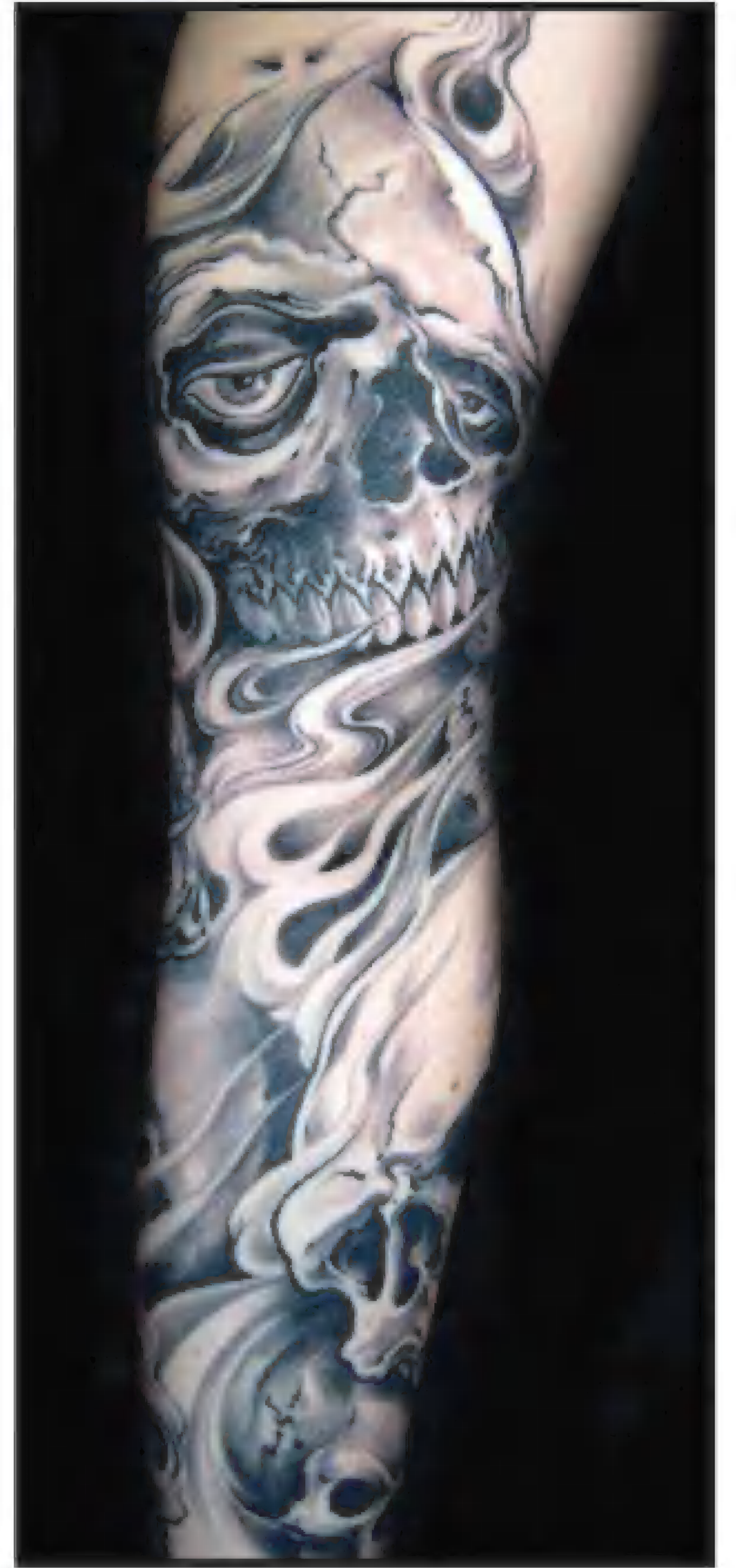
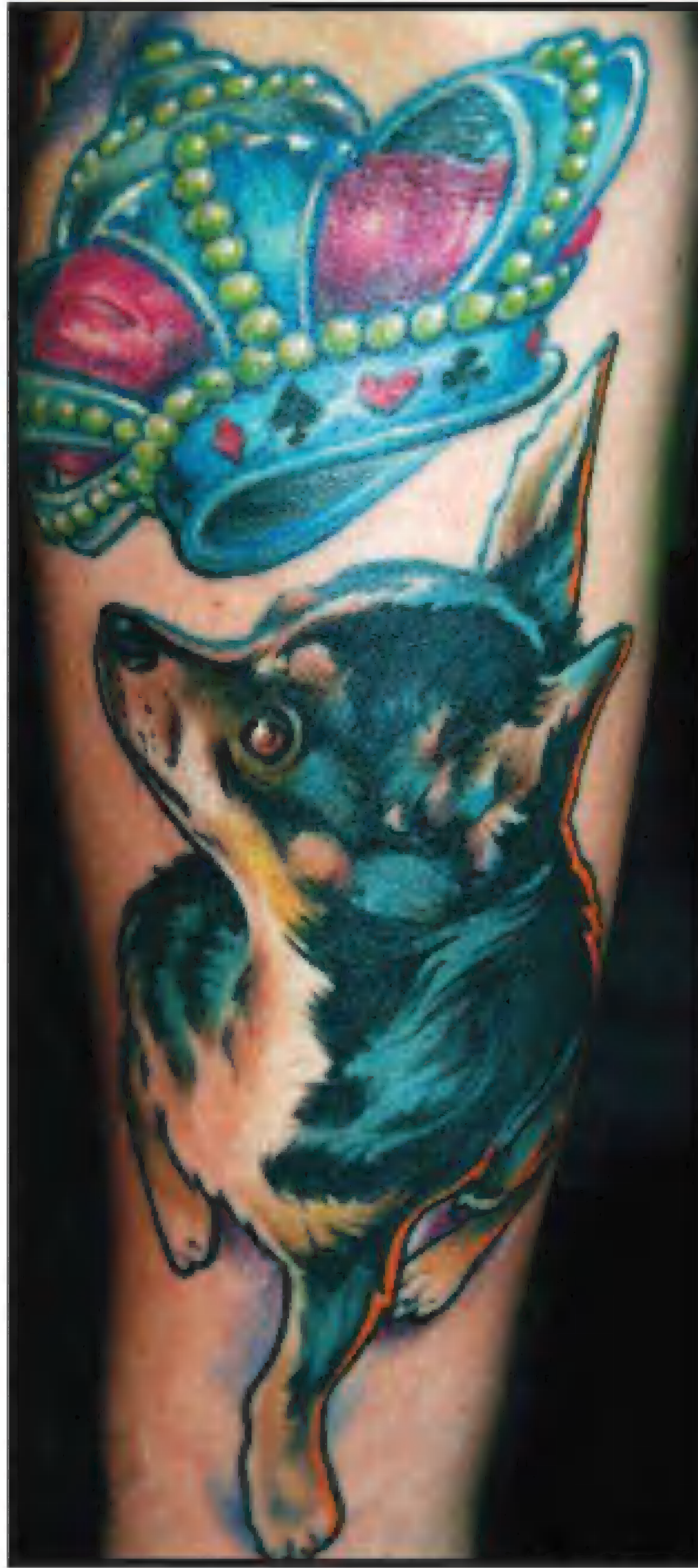
Keep track of Tomas Miroslav on the Web through his multitude of sites: www.tattoo-tomas.de, www.pileofskulls.com, www.facebook.com/tattootomas, and www.myspace.com/tattootomas. 



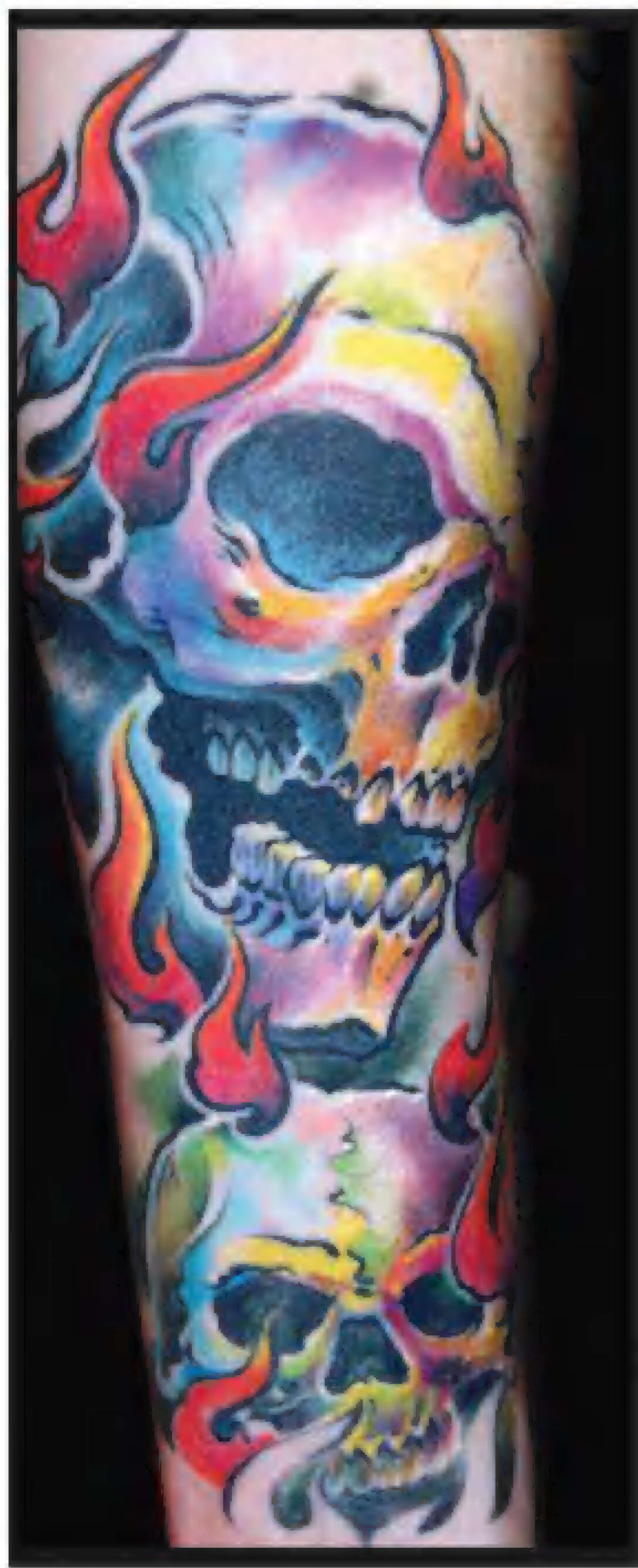




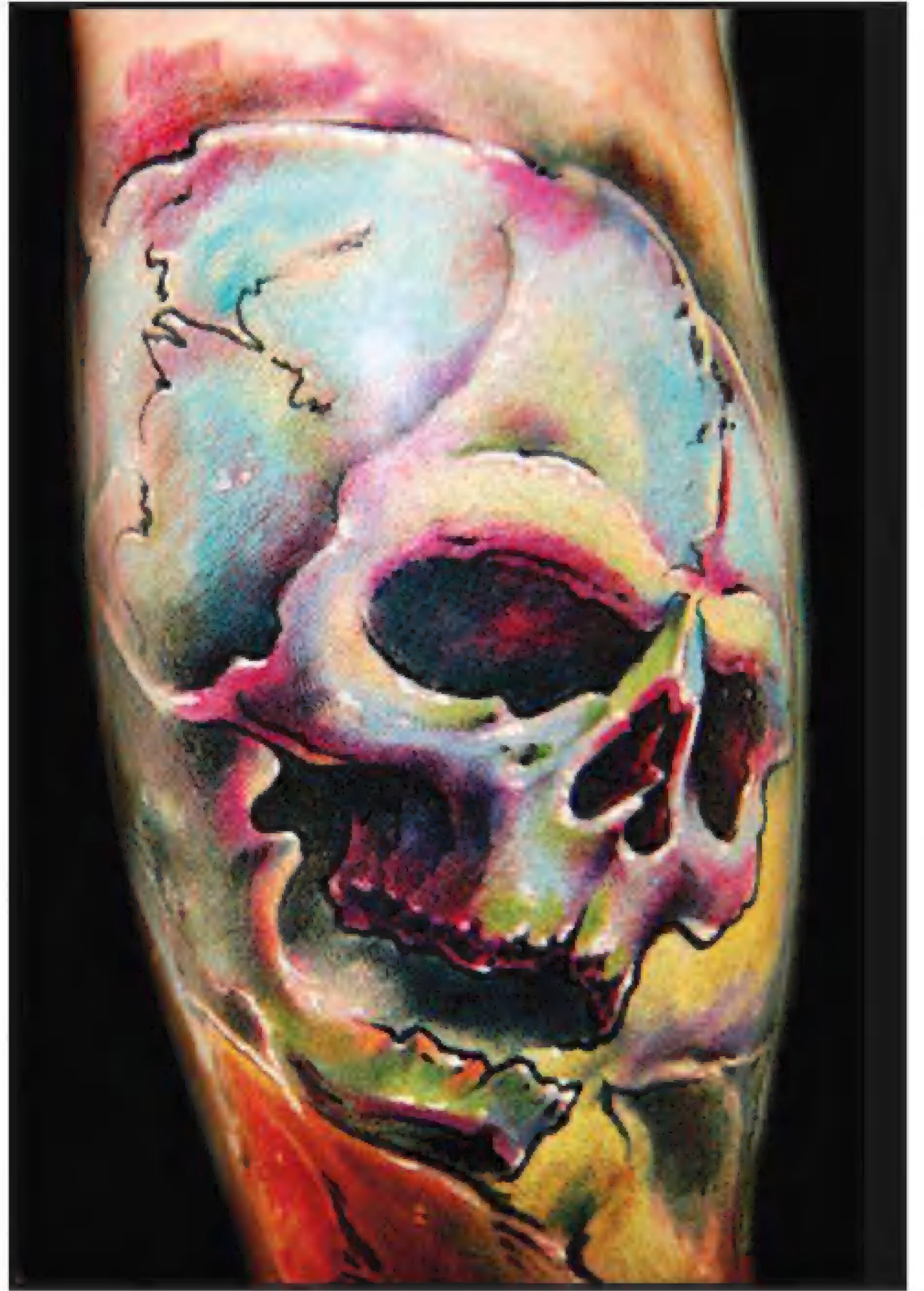




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Heavenly Bodies

tattoos BY RANDY ENGELHARD

By Amanda Stephan

In 1936, Life Magazine published an estimate that 10 million Americans, approximately six percent of the population, had at least one tattoo. Today, with tattooing being ranked as one of the fastest growing categories of retail business, it's not surprising that the number of Americans with at least one tattoo has grown substantially. It is now estimated that more than 45 million Americans have at least one tattoo. Now apply that degree of growth to the world and imagine the astounding size of the tattoo community as a whole.

To stand out as a tattoo artist in this world market is no small feat, yet German artist Randy Engelhard has done just that. Furthermore, Engelhard stands out in the field of realistic artists. He specializes in taking images that customers bring him and reproducing them on the skin. This genre of tattooing is in high demand, and it is easy to spot an artist who has it figured out. Randy Engelhard has it down. His home studio is Heaven of Colours in Zwickau, Germany. From there, he fans out across the world.

Engelhard's travel itinerary is extensive and continues to grow to accommodate his increasing clientele. Currently, it includes stopovers in Las Vegas for a guest spot at Mario Barth's studio, in California to attend Ink-N-Iron and to work with Roman Abrego at Artistic Elements, and then on to Calgary where he has a guest spot at Immaculate Concept. He also regularly spends time in Frankfurt, Germany; Melbourne, Australia; Doncaster and London, England.

The fact that he has clients from around the world requesting his custom artwork is one of Engelhard's proudest achievements. He is able to fill appointments in the destinations of his choosing. He is also proud of the two tattoo conventions that he organizes each year, Tattoo Expo Zwickau and Rock'n Ink Chemnitz. Those shows allow Engelhard to make connections with other artists from around the world, artists whom he admires like Boris, Nikko



Hurtado, and Mike DeVries. He has collected tattoos from his peers, several from Boris in particular. "What I get is decided by the artist," he said. "I just give him a rough theme and let him freehand." The conventions also enable him to showcase his tattooing, which Engelhard describes as colorful realism. He enjoys combining subjects that might ordinarily be in opposition. "I often try to connect beauty with something evil/demonic," he said.

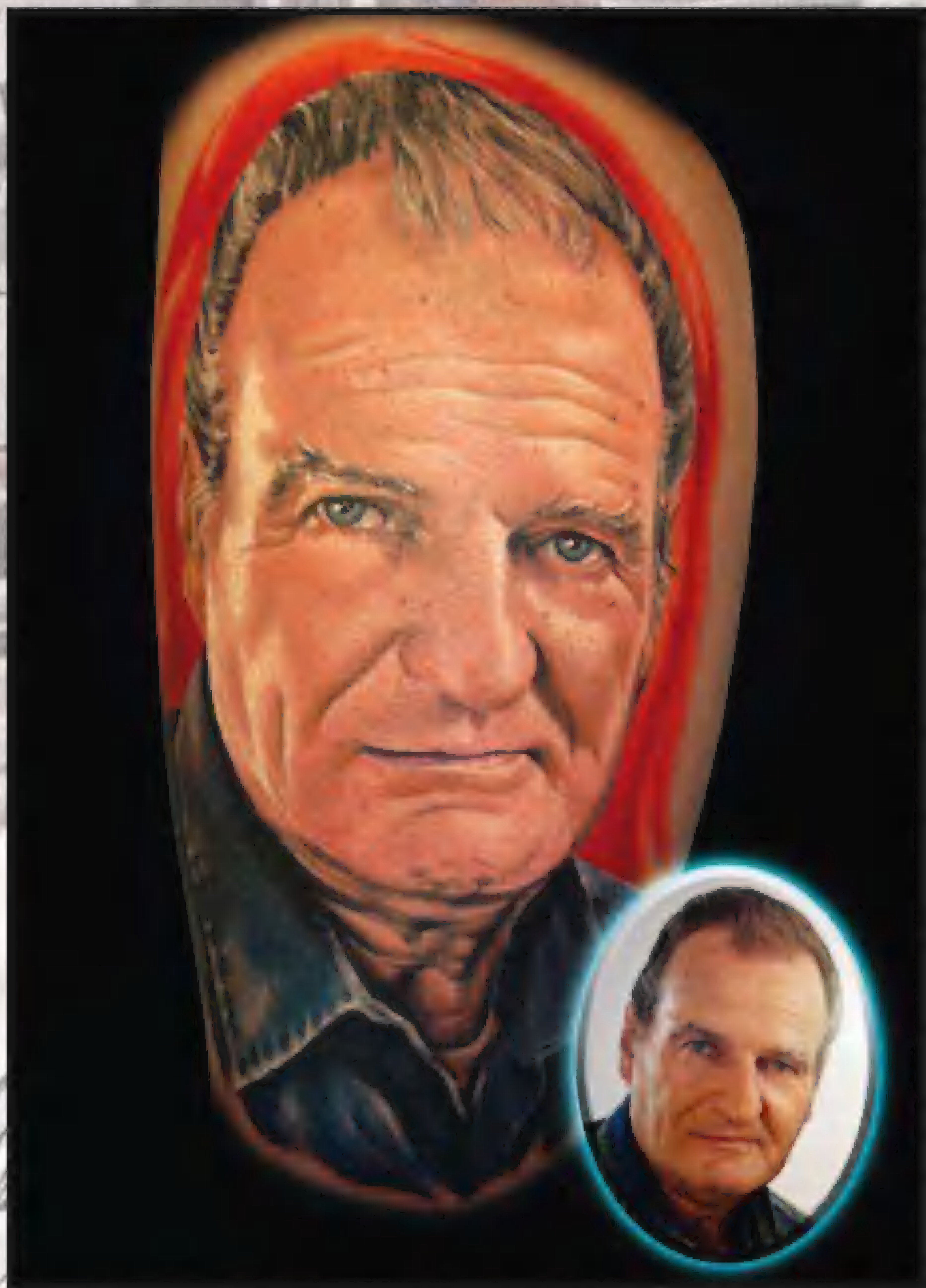
Engelhard has spent the last 10 years finding harmonious ways to present his vision through art. Tattooing has brought him to a place of comfortable peace. It also satisfies a life-long ambition that took root when he was in the sixth grade. This success has helped his family become comfortable with his chosen path as well. "After I started to earn money they were calm," he said. "Before it was, of course, a bit difficult, but now it's ok for all of them." Meanwhile, Engelhard spends his time tilting the statistics in his own way, making sure more people worldwide have more tattoos.

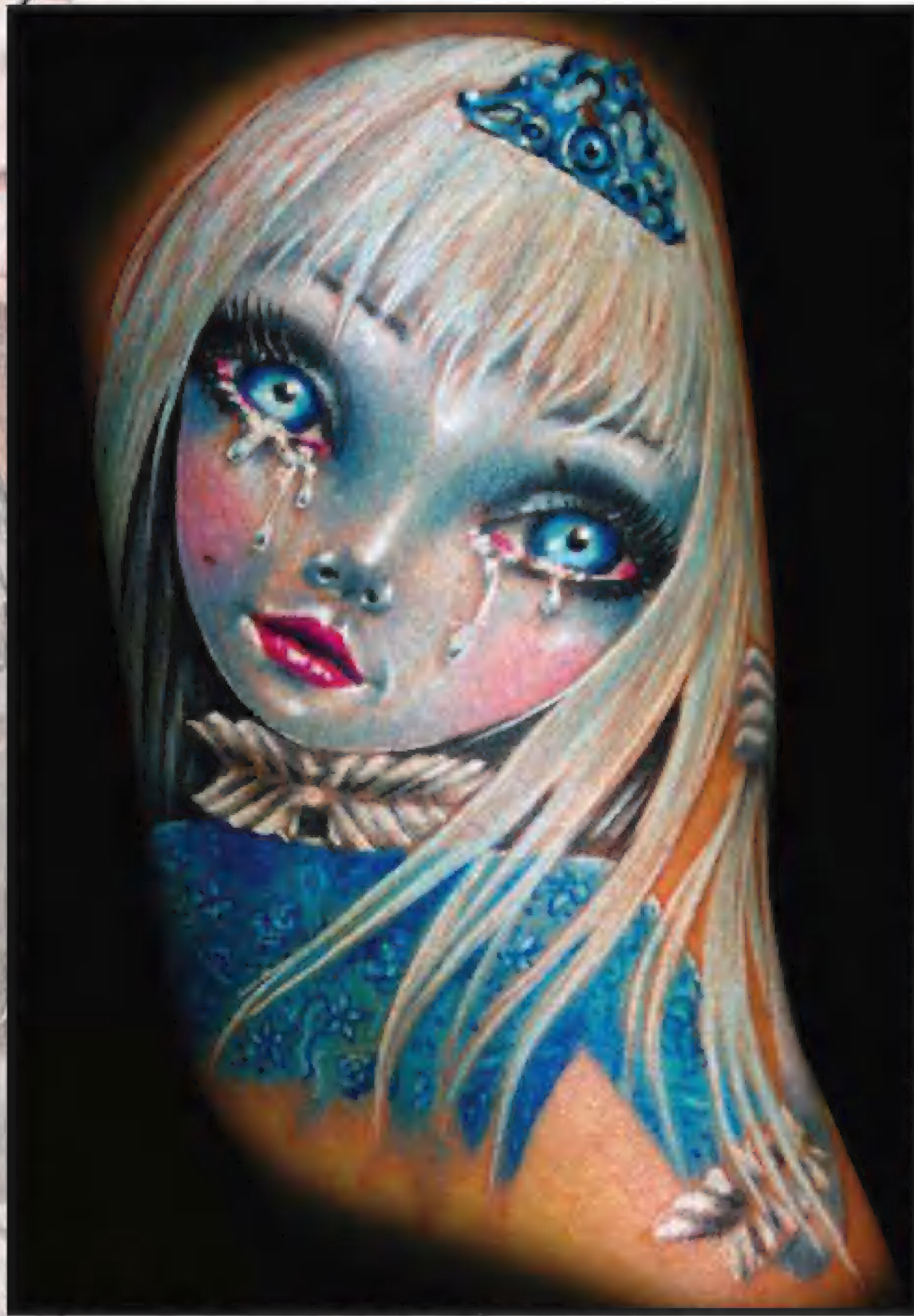
You can locate Randy Engelhard on the Web at www.heavenofcolours.de or at his studio, Heaven of Colours in Zwickau, Germany. 📍





Randy Engelhard













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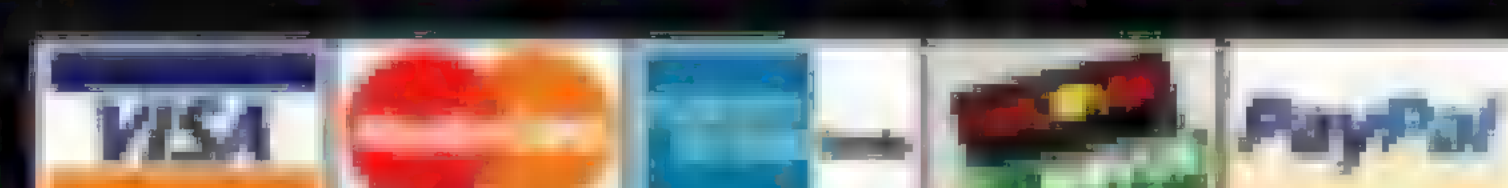
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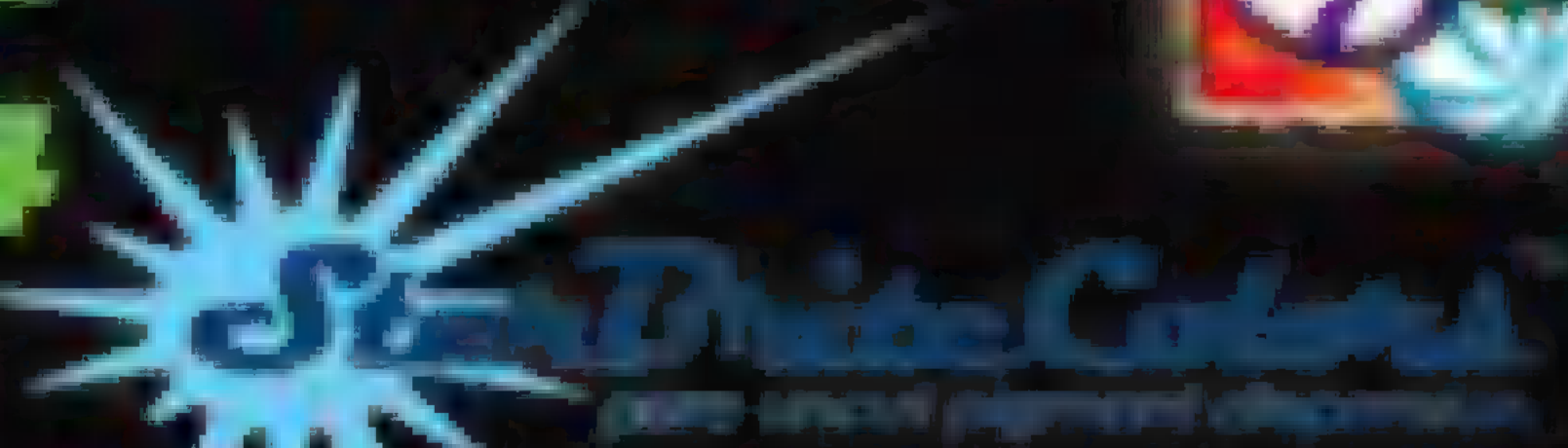
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TRUE BELIEVER

MICHIGAN'S ZAQ WEAVER

By Amanda Stephan

WHEN ZAQ WEAVER JOINED THE TATTOO COMMUNITY, his family wasn't certain that he had chosen the best career path. "They were a little apprehensive at first," he said, "but once they saw that this was something that I really loved and wasn't just some passing phase, they backed me wholeheartedly."

Before committing to tattooing, Weaver was employed in an art-based company, an outfit that did graphic design and photography. Unfortunately, not all of Weaver's duties demanded creativity. Whenever there wasn't "art" work for him to do, he had to pick up the slack in other departments, which included proofreading and writing. It became clear to Weaver that a traditional office environment wasn't for him. "At some point while working there I started getting tattooed and the thought crossed my mind that, 'Hey, this could be a thing that I could really enjoy,'" Weaver said. "I had always liked the idea of tattoos and tattooing, but never really thought it was an option. It's not exactly what your guidance counselor tells you is okay during school."

Weaver began to spend more time at a local studio and even negotiated his way into what he describes as a half-assed apprenticeship. "I honestly don't count any of this time at all," he said, "but the one thing I learned during this period is what a good tattoo looks like. After looking through a magazine one day, I came across a few pictures that I thought were amazing. When I went to the credits, to my surprise it was an artist only about forty-five minutes from where I lived. At that point, I set off to get tattooed by that artist." That's when Weaver met Todd Melson of Marvel Tattoo in South Bend, Indiana.

After a few sessions of tattoo work with Melson, Weaver began bringing his own artwork in for Melson to critique. Weaver listened attentively, making the revisions that were suggested and bringing the artwork back to Melson to re-evaluate. Weaver's diligence paid off when Melson offered to take him on as an apprentice. "That's the day my life changed forever," Weaver said, "and I am forever grateful to Todd and everything he has ever done for me."

On June 22, 2005, Weaver began tattooing at Marvel. It's this date that he uses to mark

ZAQ WEAVER

his tattoo anniversary. Since, Weaver has turned to a multitude of other artists for inspiration. He counts Colin McClain, Tim Biedron, Nick Baxter, Adrian Dominic, Nathan Kostechko, Shige, Grime, and Guy Aitchison among them. "I've been lucky enough to have been tattooed by several of them and even luckier to have become friends with some of them," Weaver said. "Every one of these guys has either inspired me by the amazing work they put out or inspired me by being there for me and pushing me to further myself."

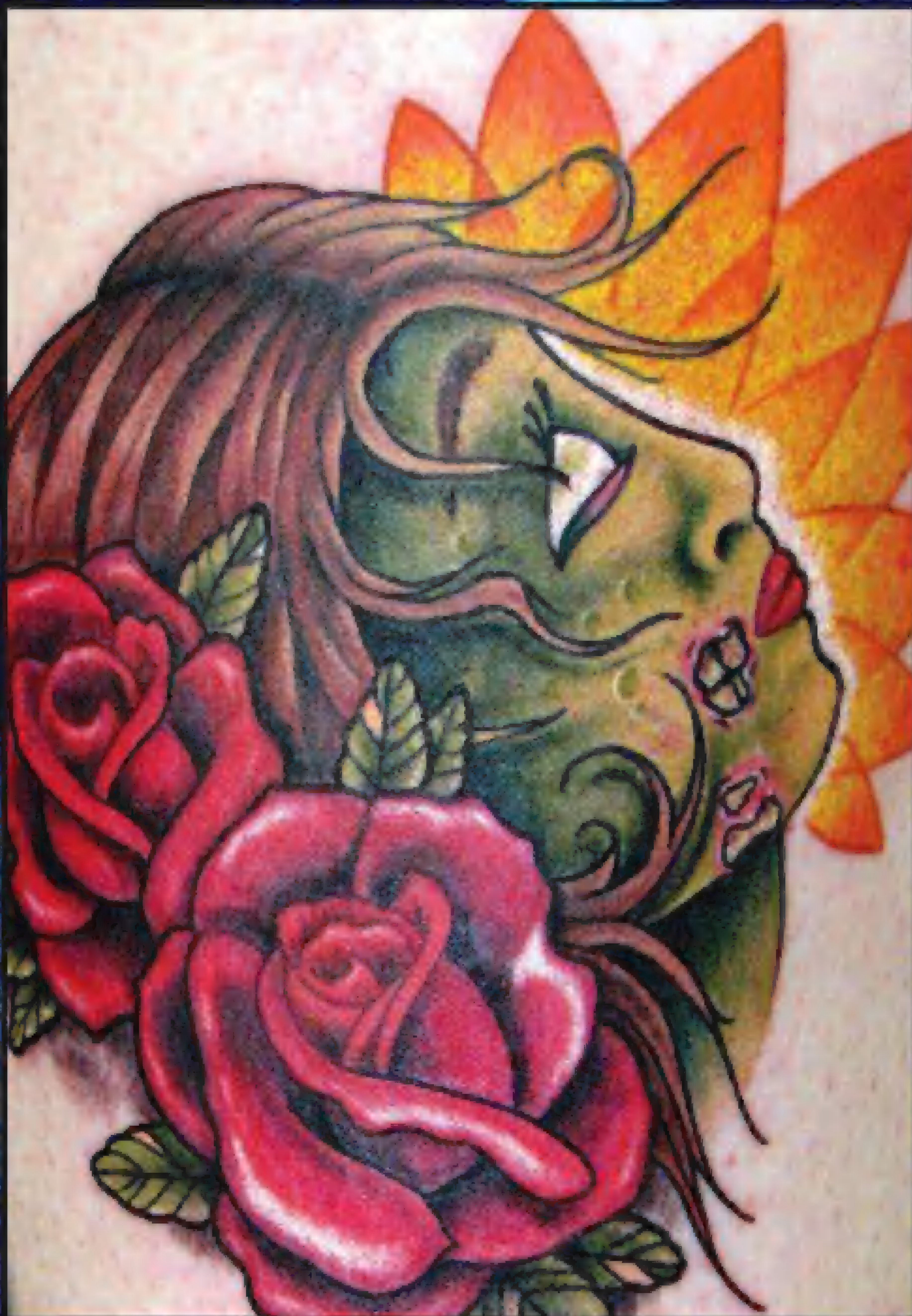
Weaver has found a comfort zone artistically, creating artwork that he characterizes as a bastardized combination of photorealism and New School. "I tend to feel that my artwork is very natural," he said. "I try to push nature and organic textures. It's about bringing forth the inner beauty of what is around us." Weaver has also found a more literal comfort zone in which he can create art. His studio, Conception Gallery, celebrated its one-year anniversary in January, 2011. Zaq and his wife also welcomed their first child in February.

With all that has occurred as of late, Zaq Weaver has a lot to appreciate. "I cannot express how grateful I am to Todd Melson. Todd has not only helped my career but truly helped me as a person. Without his guidance, I wouldn't be anywhere."

Find Zaq Weaver at Conception Gallery in Saint Joseph, Michigan, or on the Web at zaqweaver.com.



ZAQ WEAVER



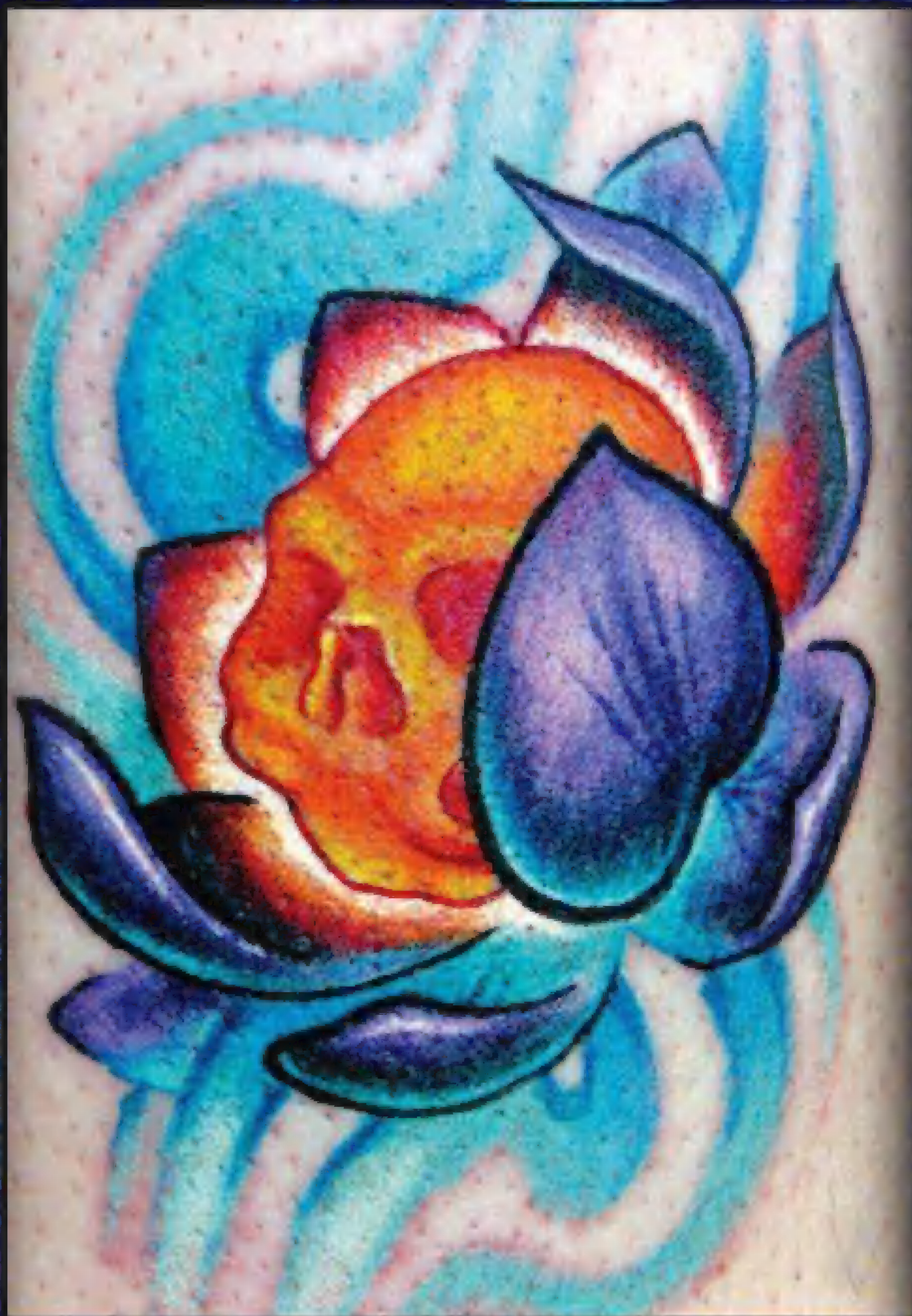


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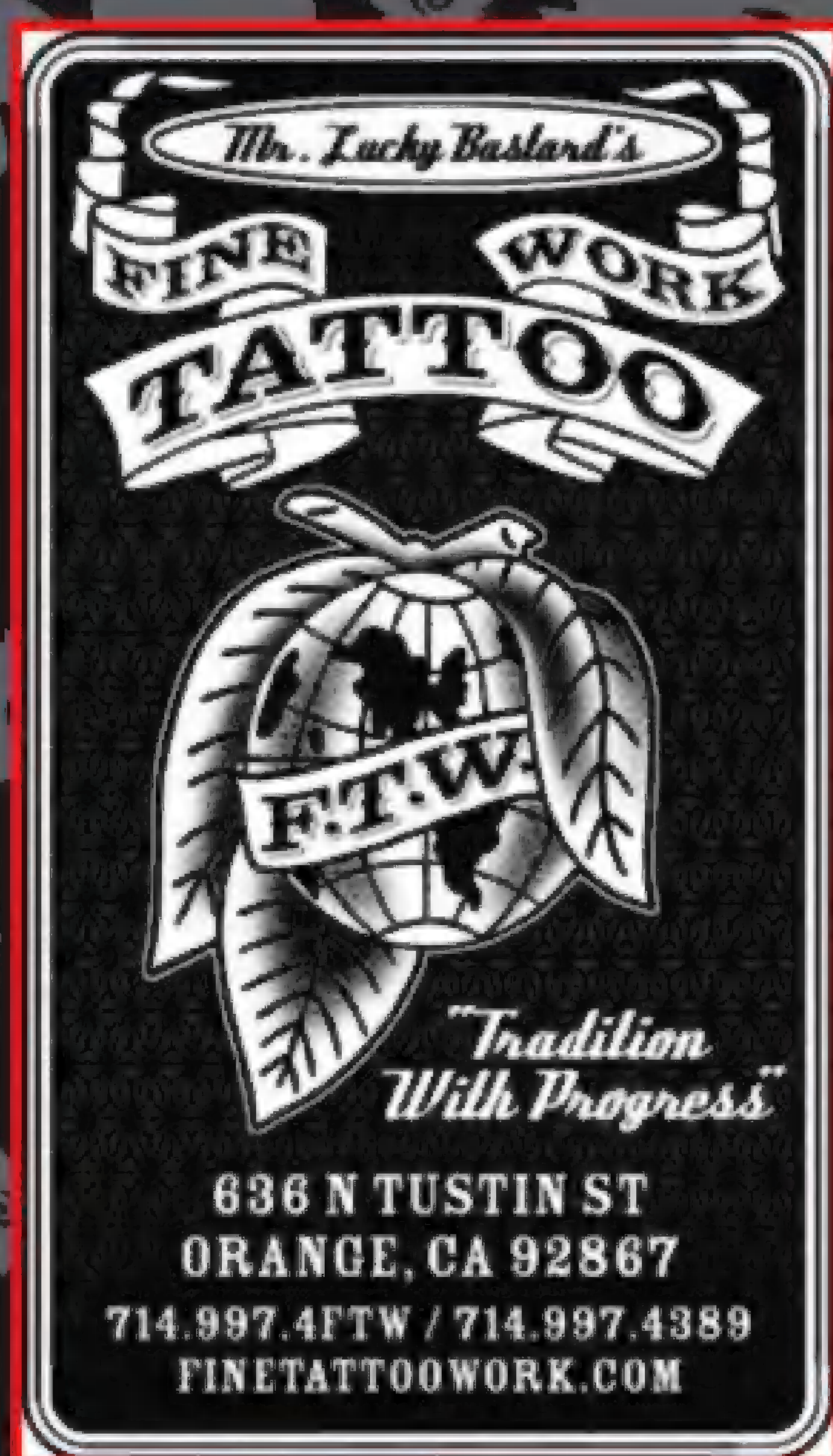
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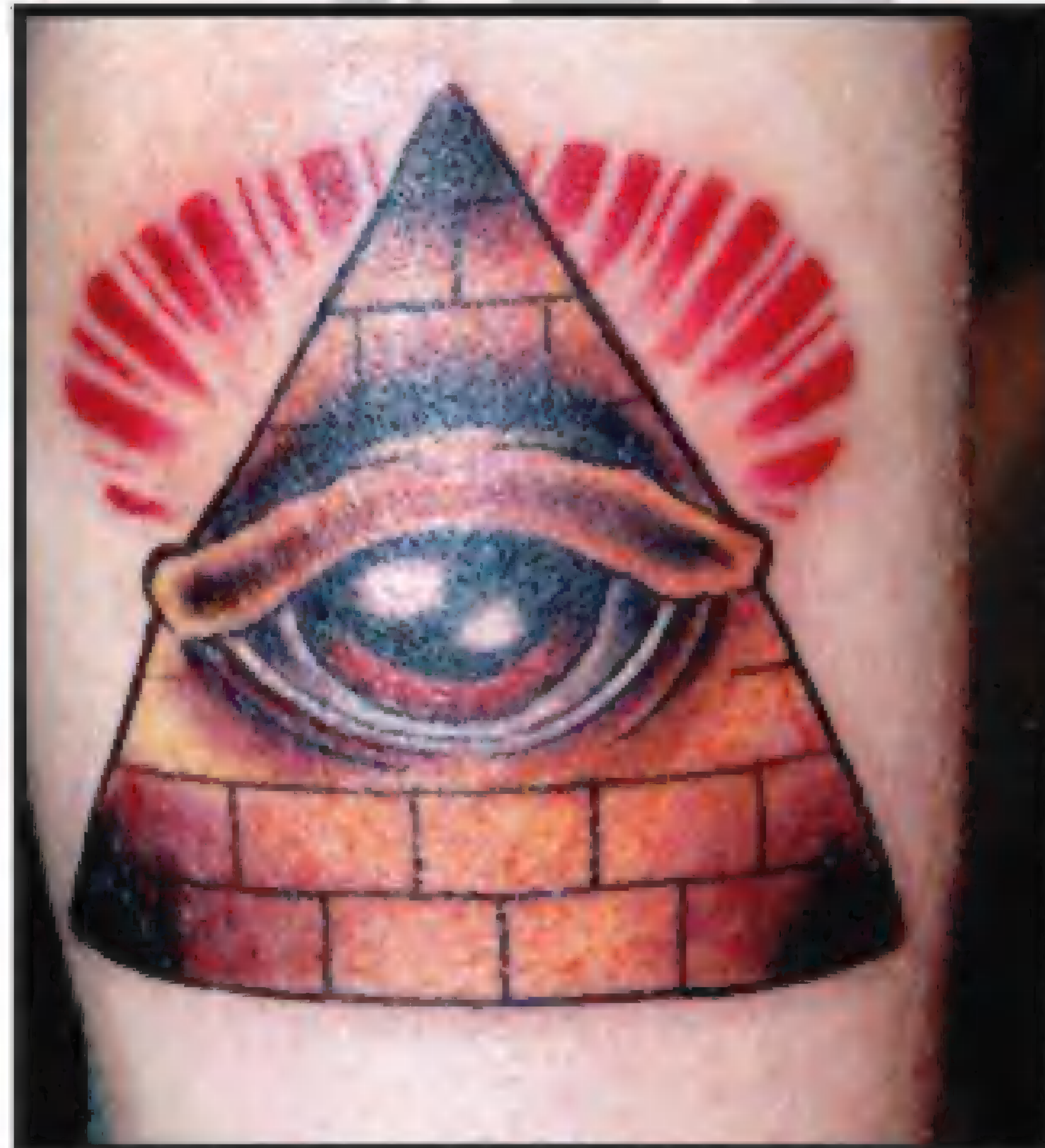
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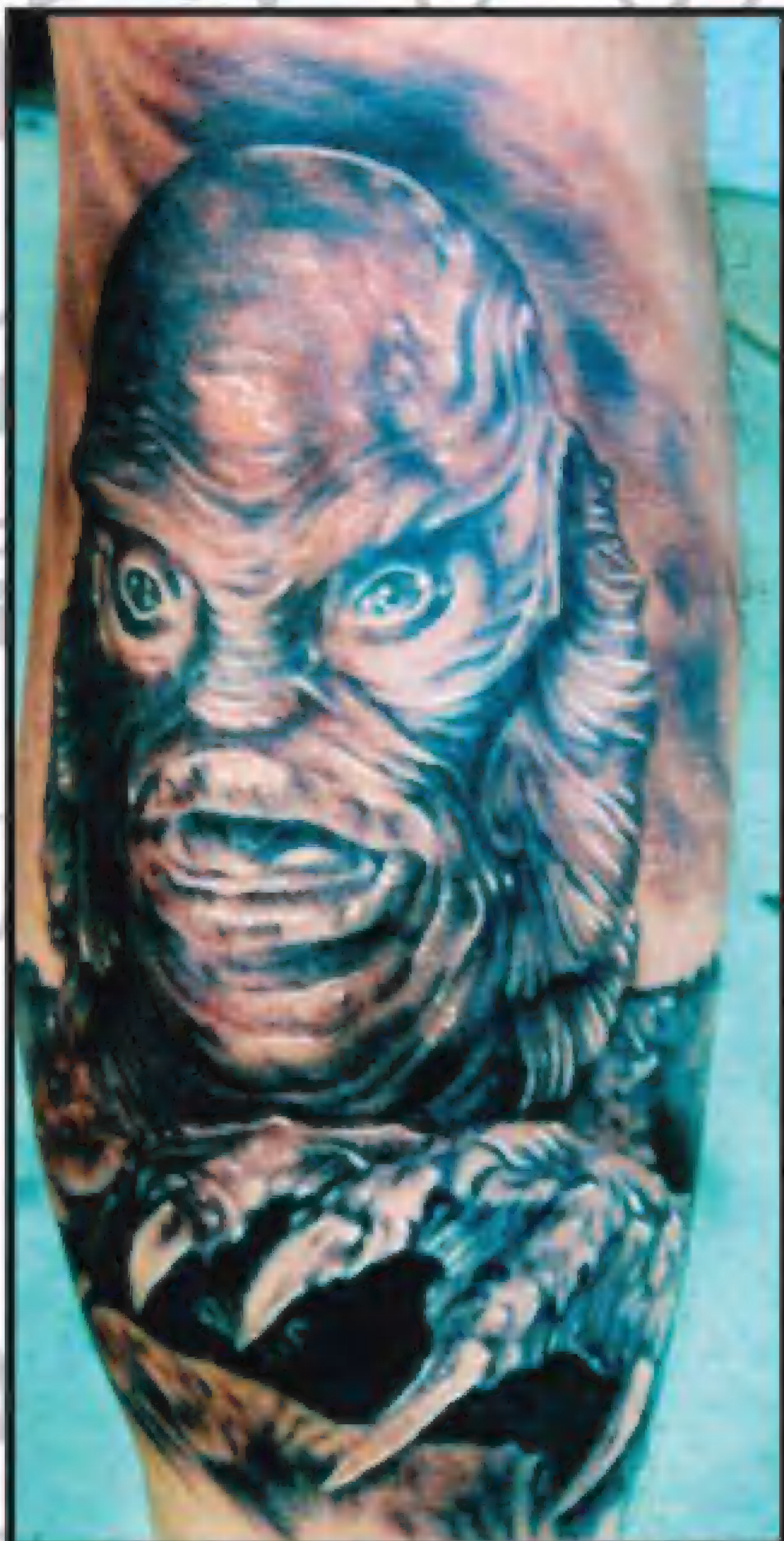
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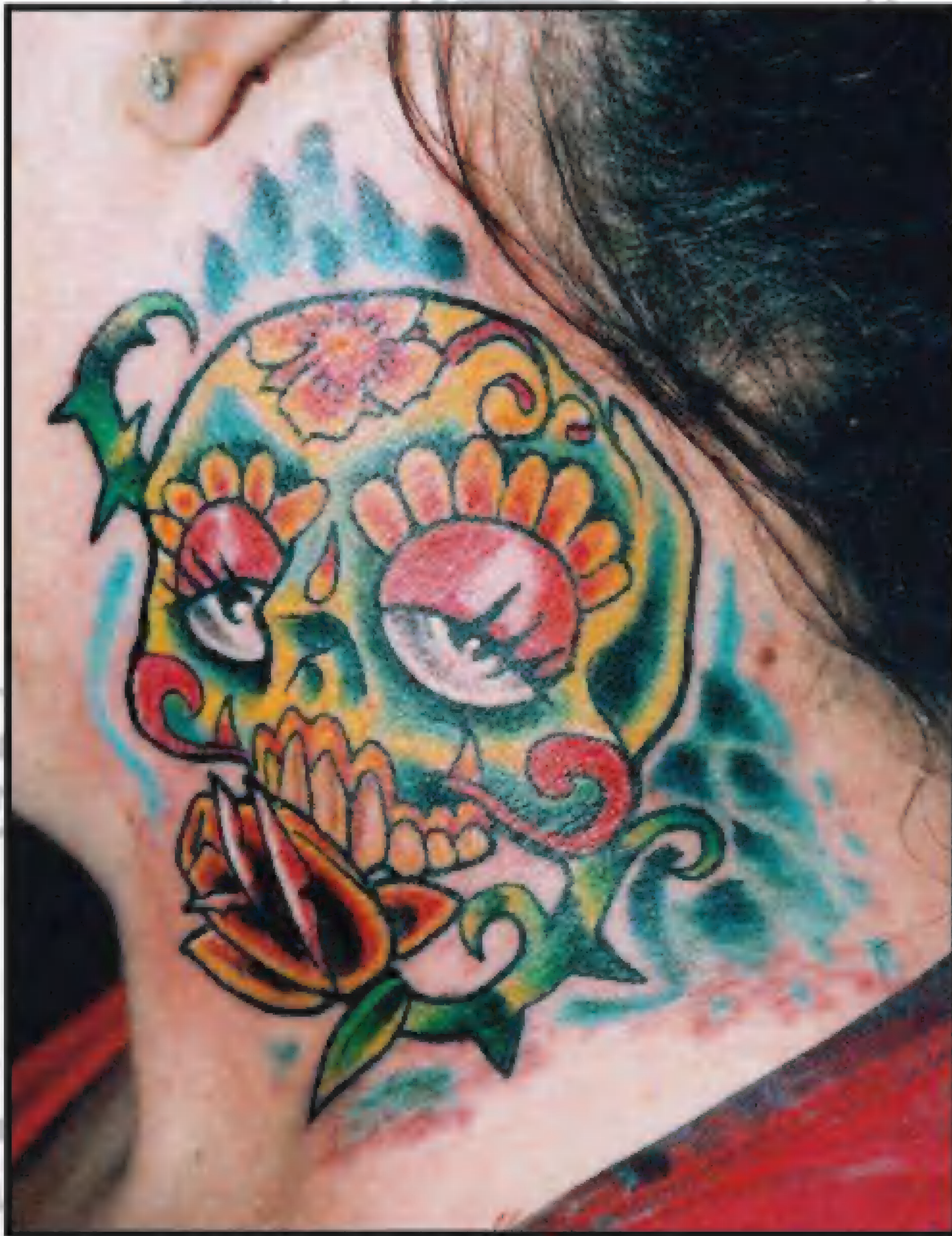
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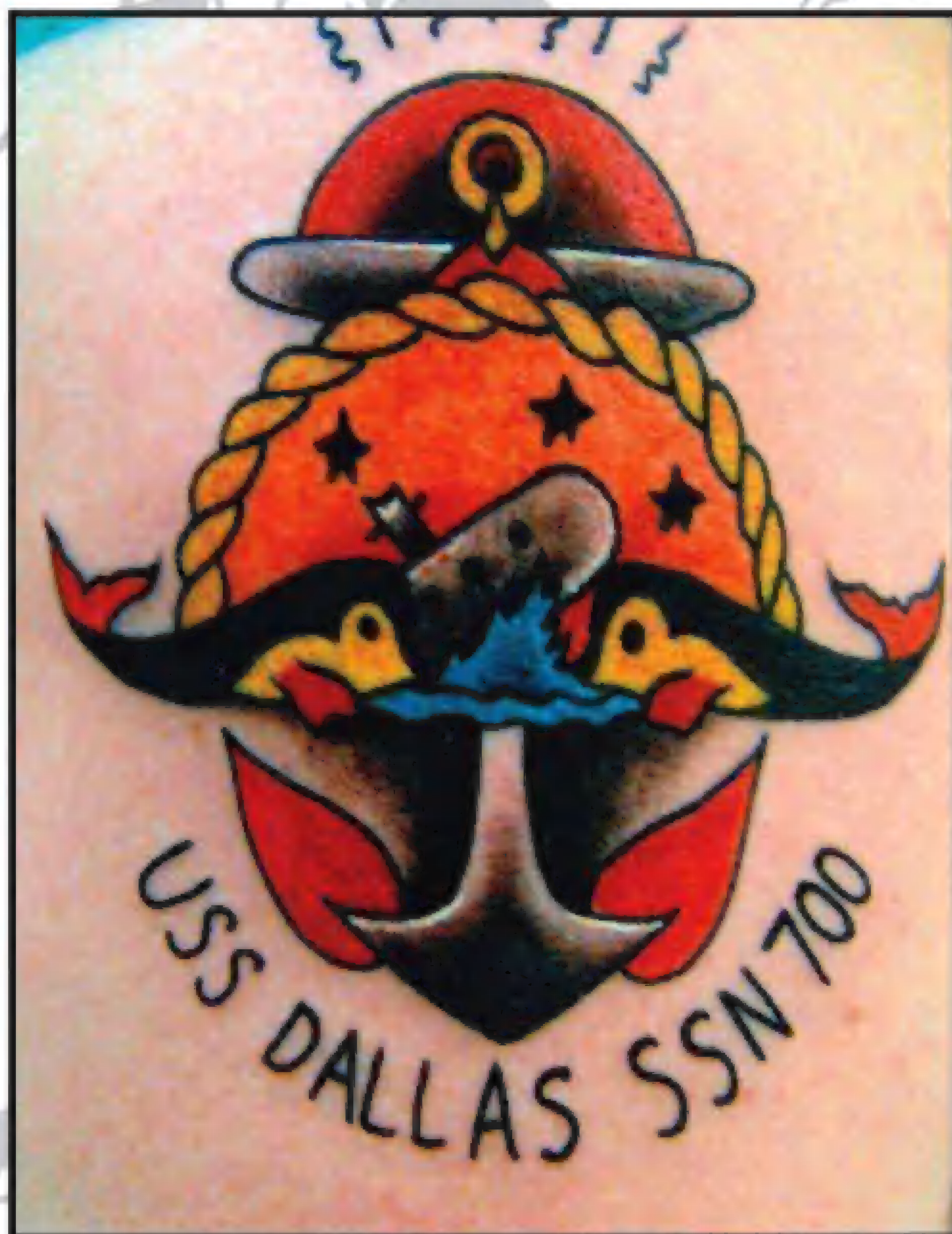
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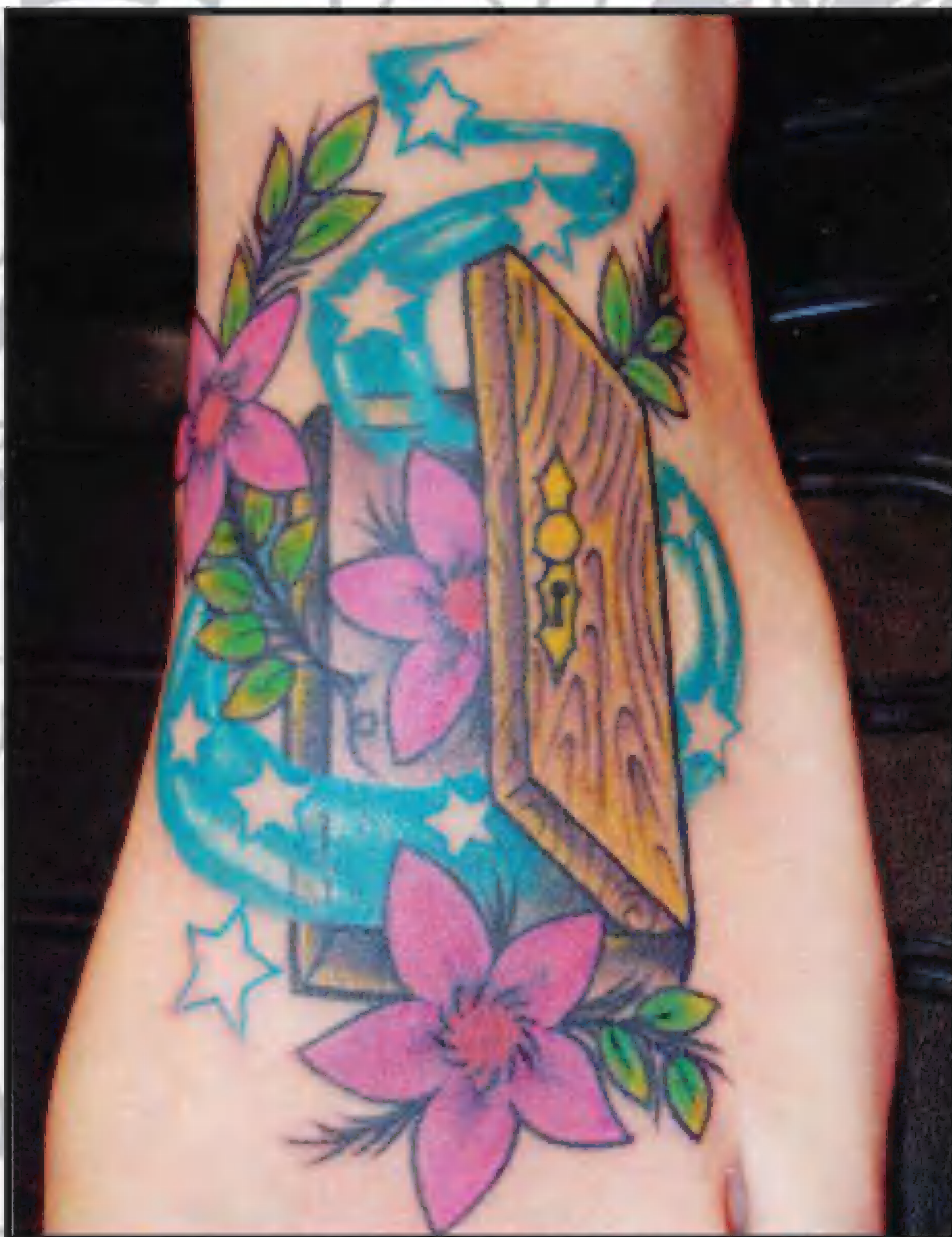
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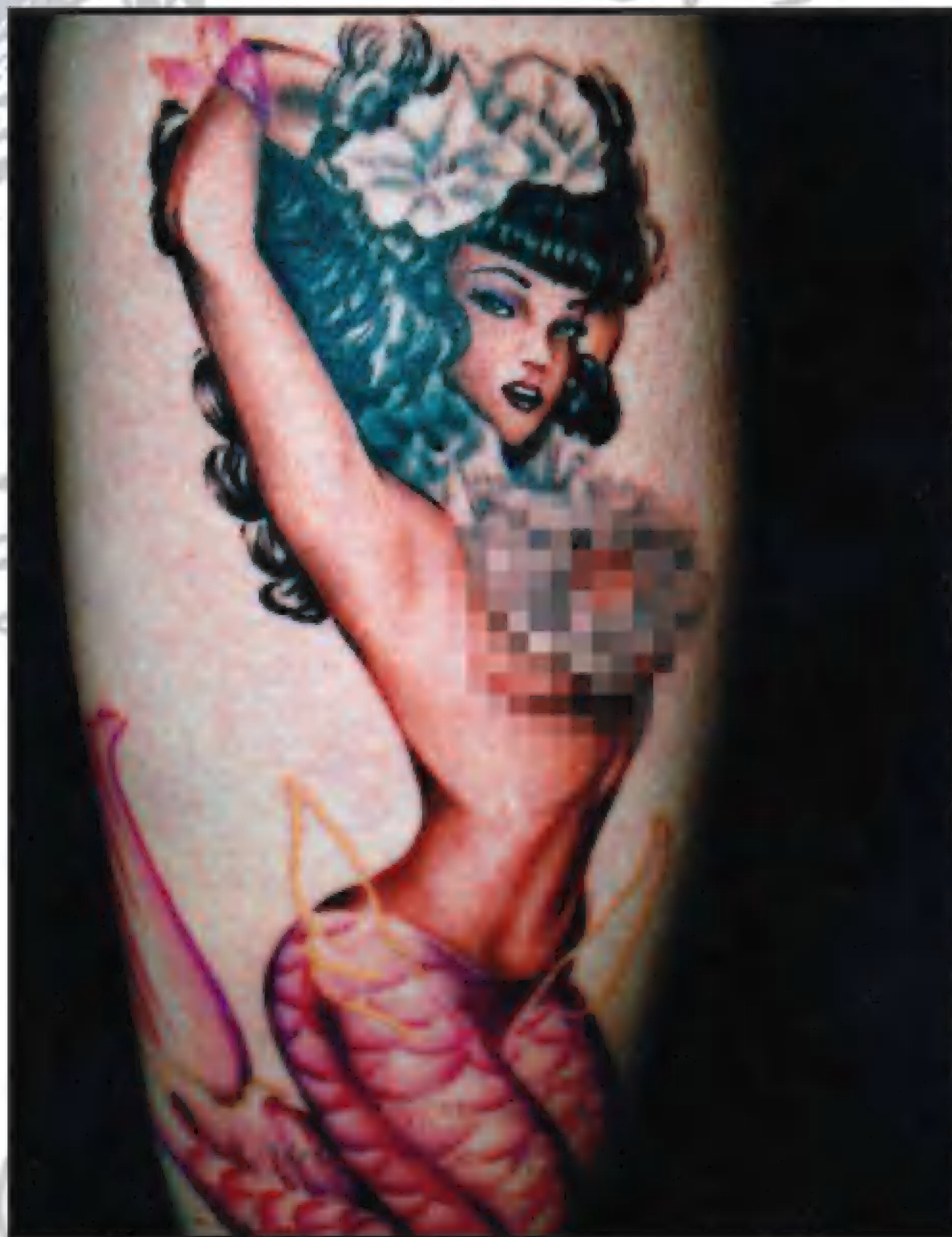
Azarja van der Veen, Shotsie's Tattoo
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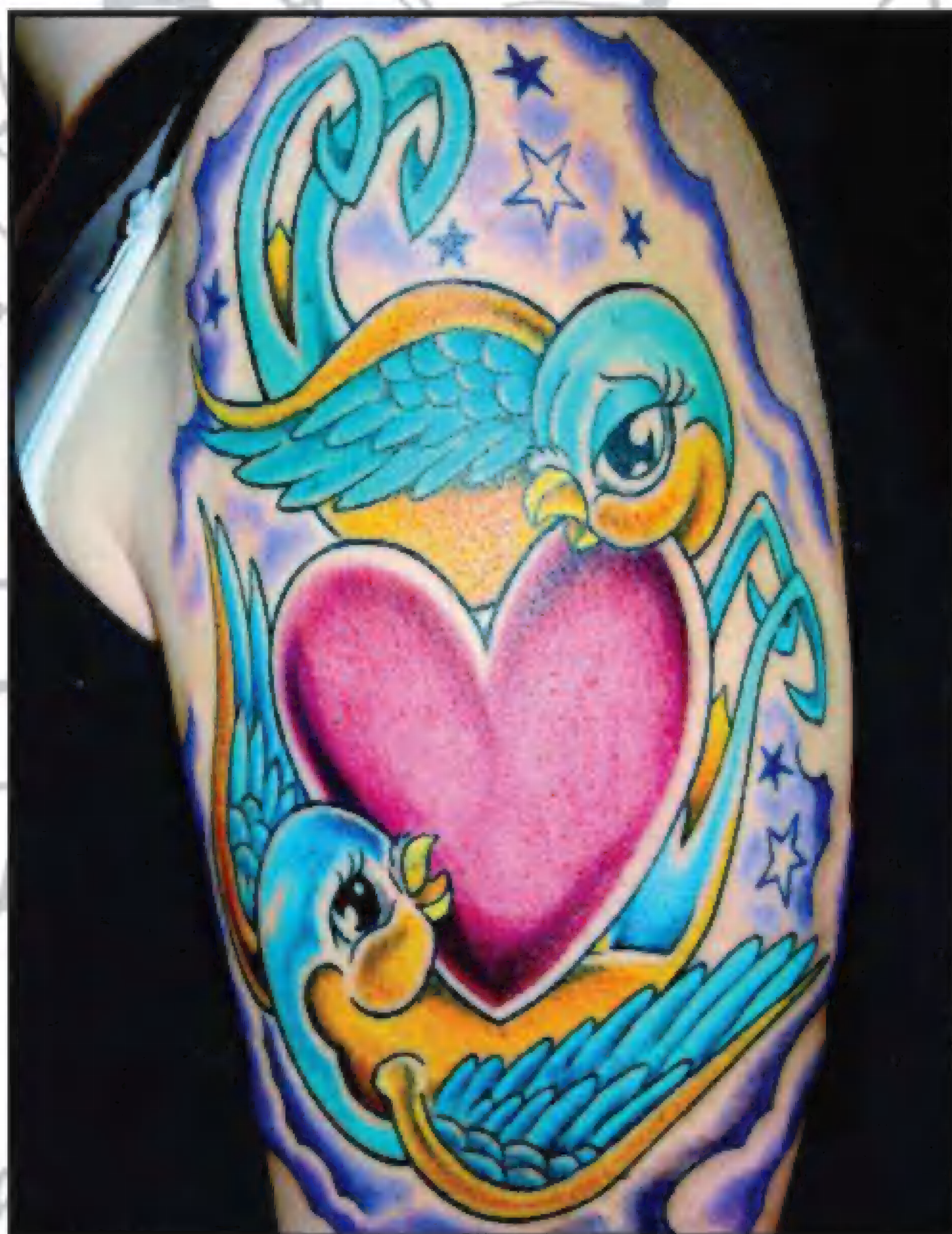
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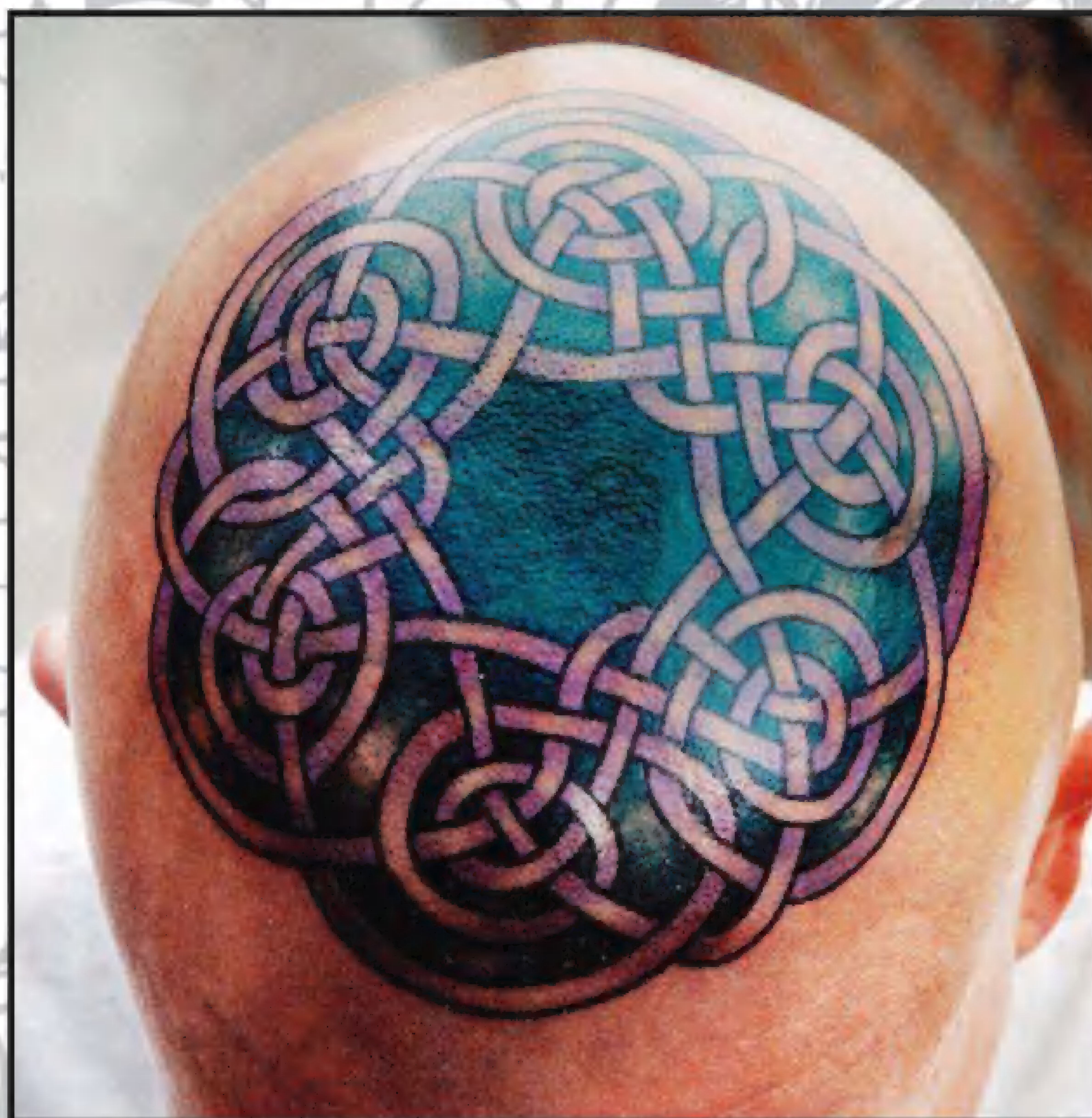
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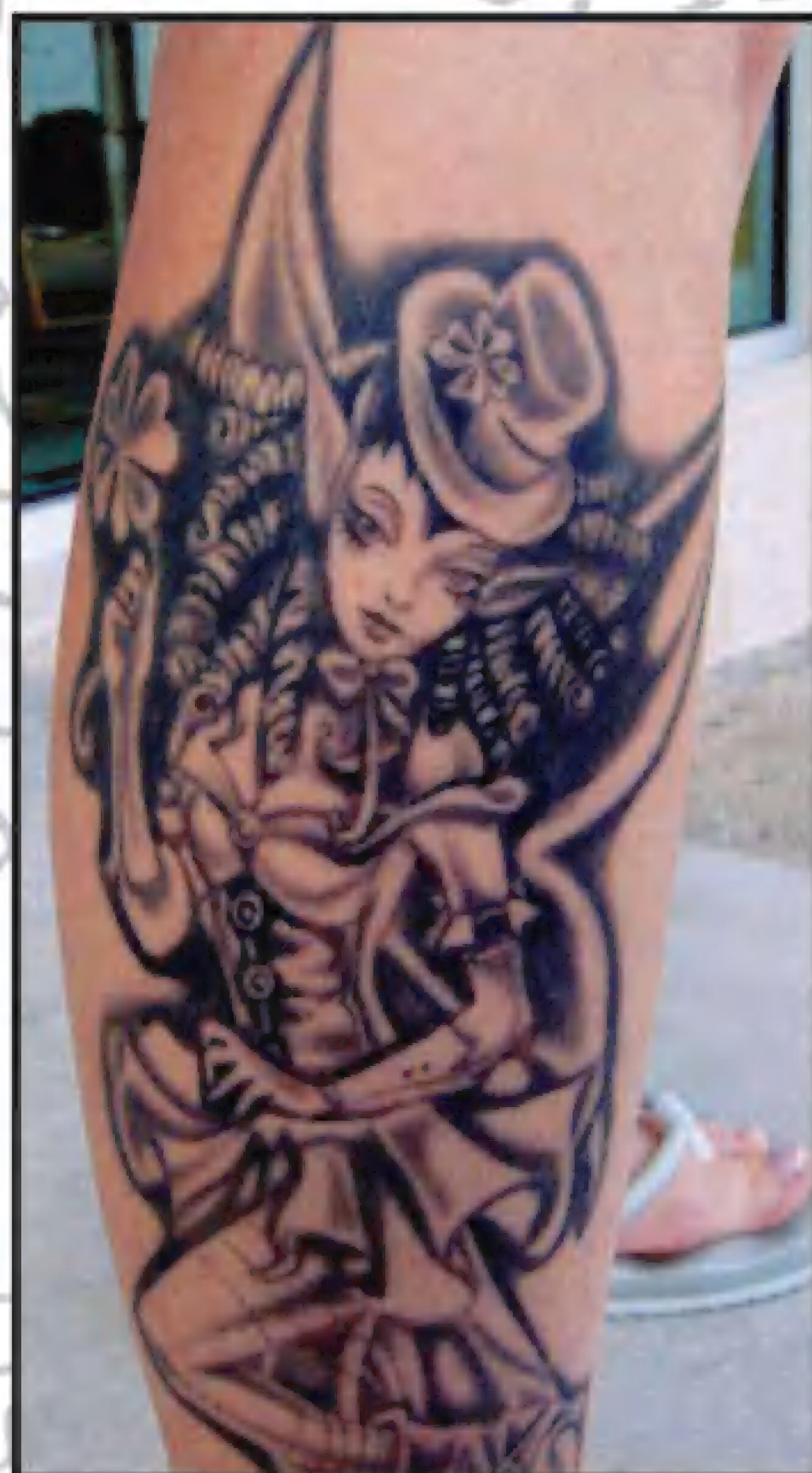
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Charleston, WV



Suzi Q, Holdfast Tattoo
Perth, Australia



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Chad Chase, Venom Ink
Sanford, ME



Seth Davidson, Ancient Art Tattoo
Charleston, WV



Shahn Anderson, Electric Dragonland
Hopkins, MN



OJ Cohen, New Millenium Tattoo
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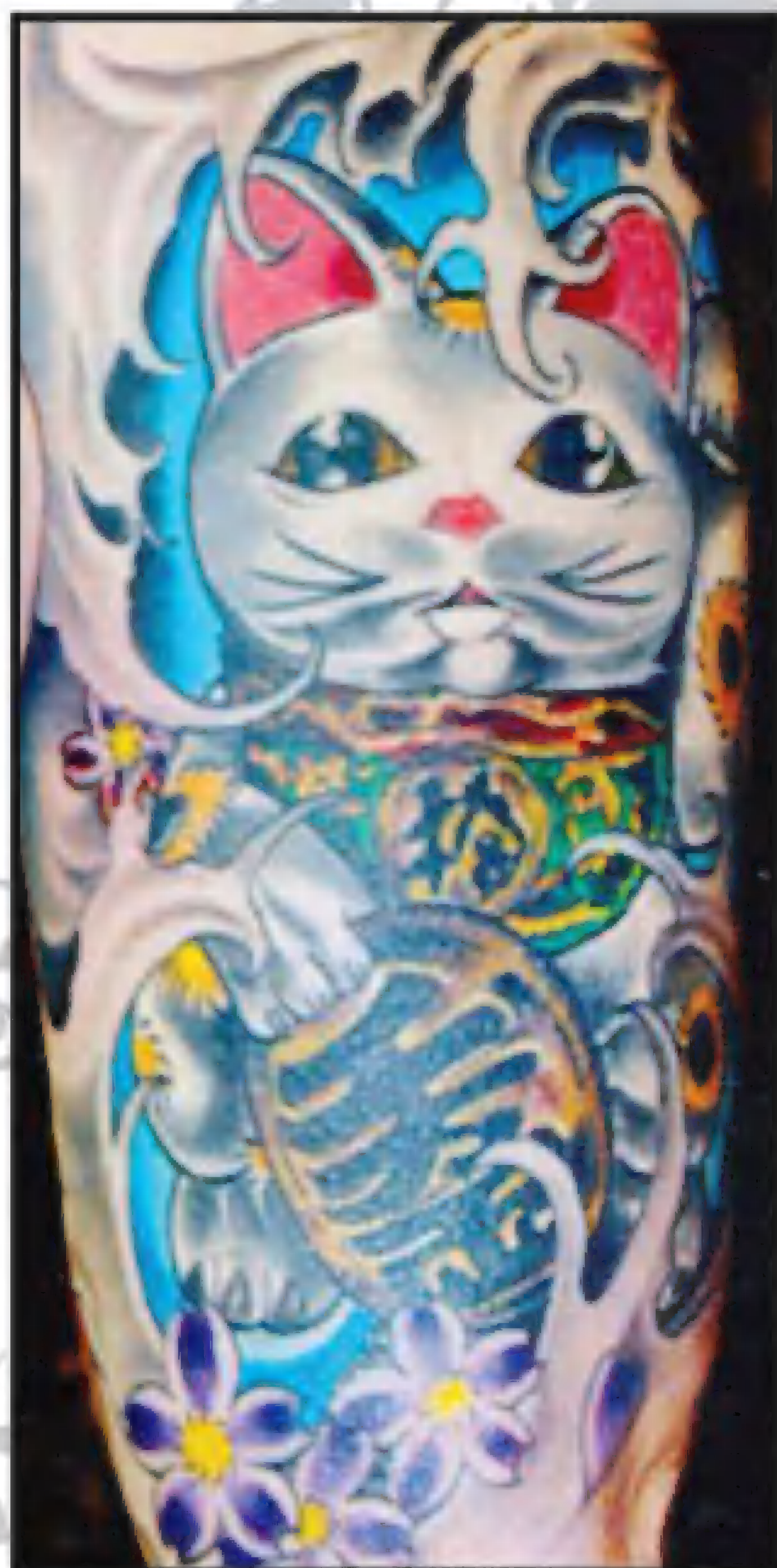
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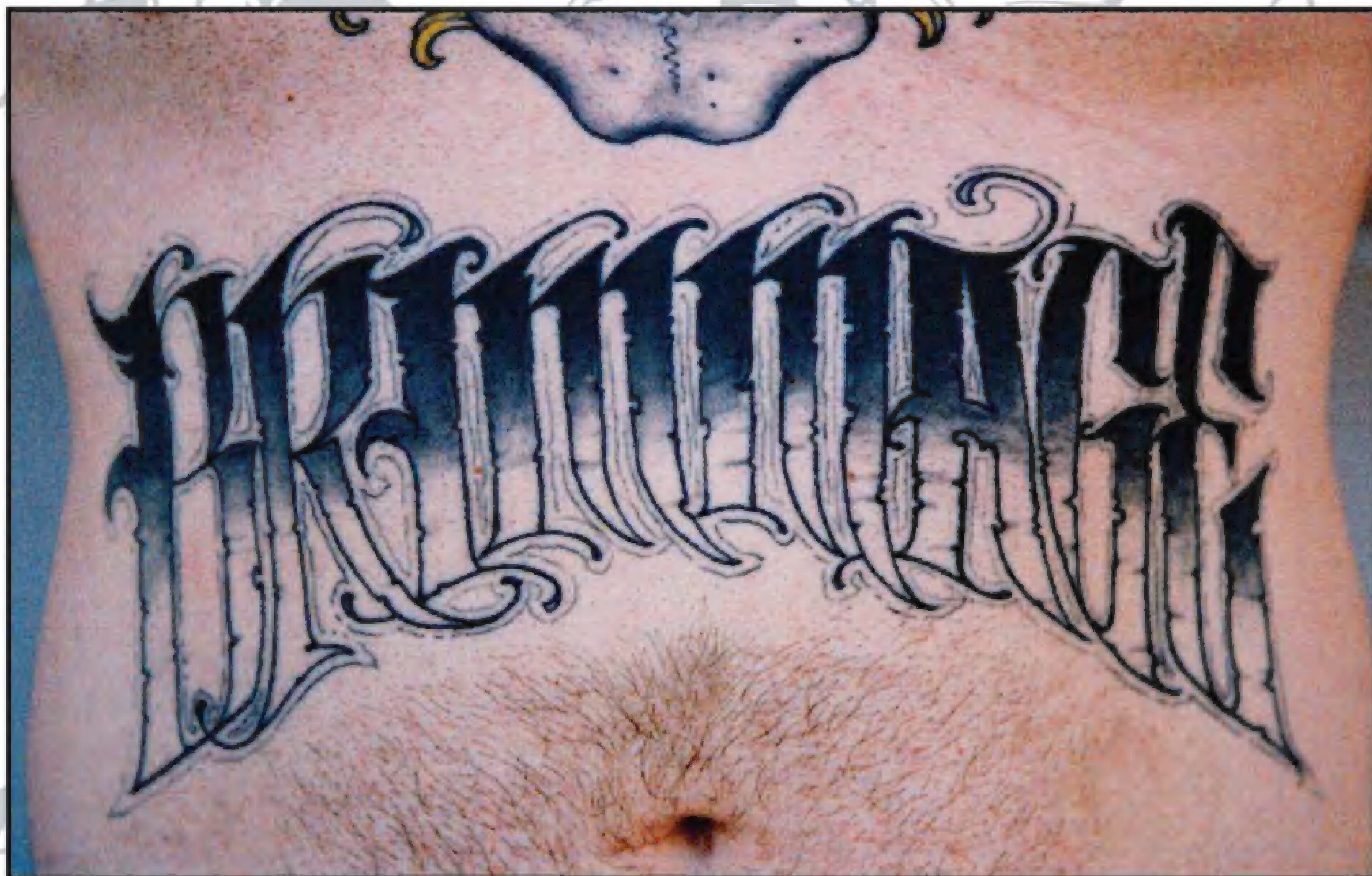
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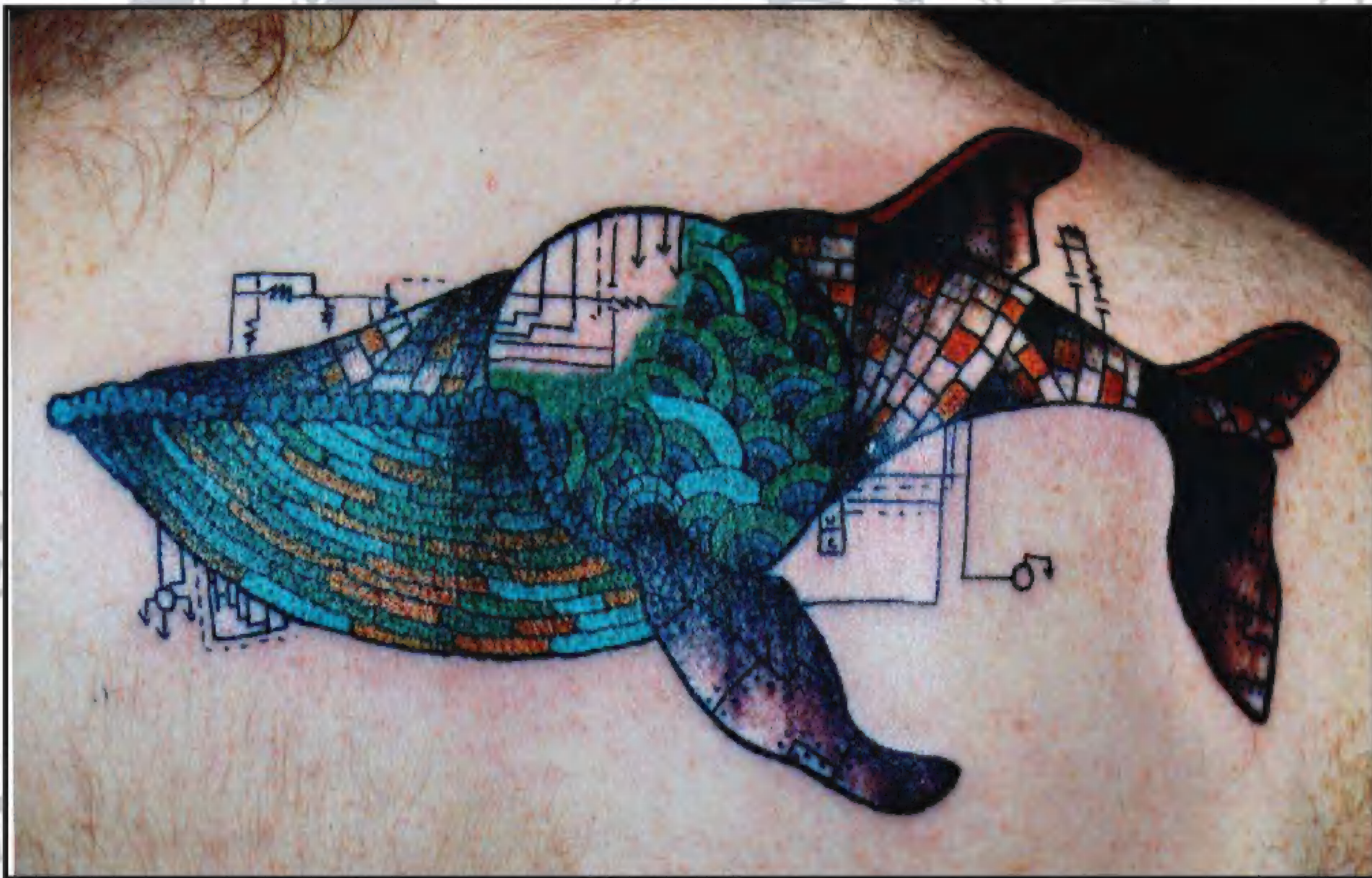
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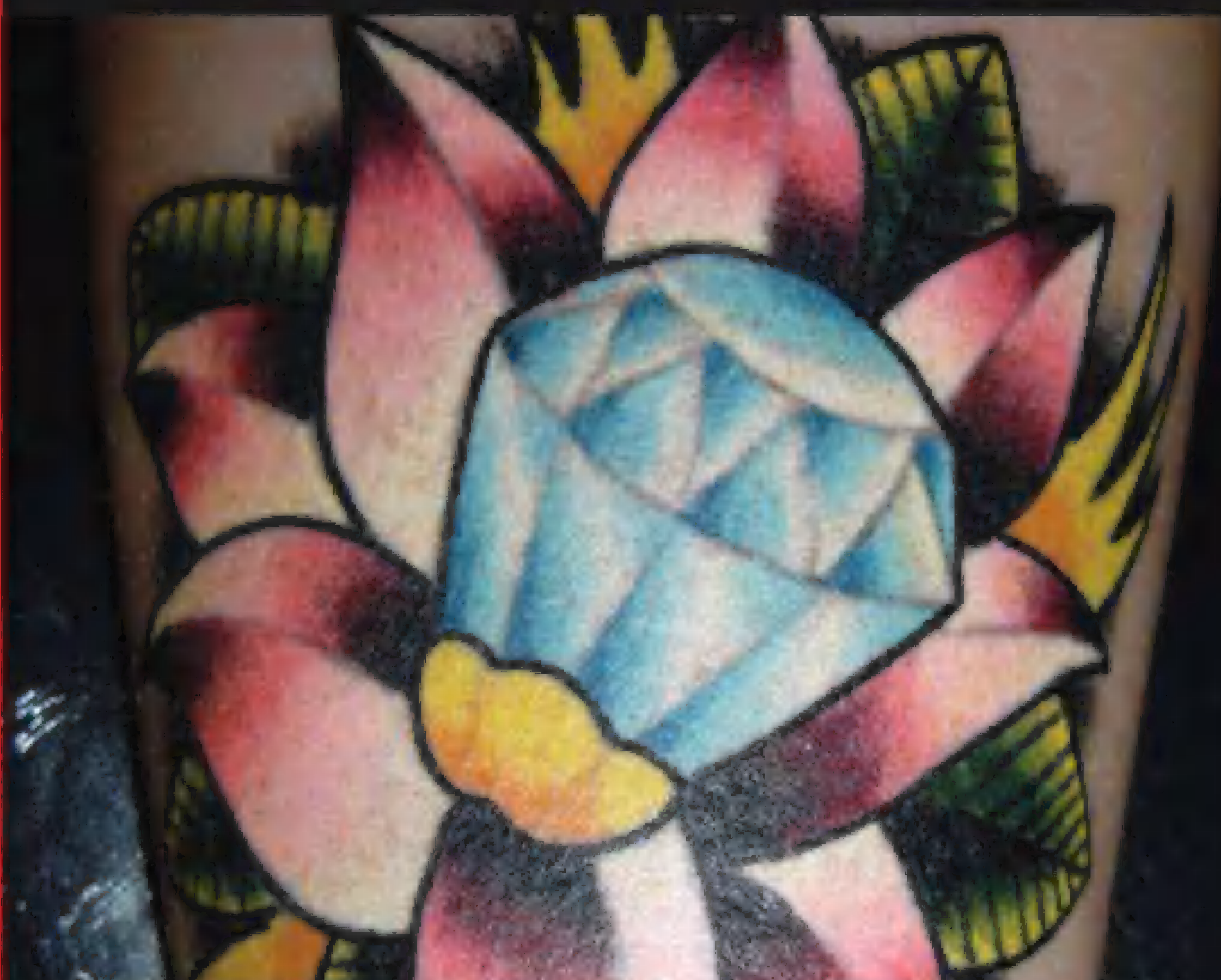
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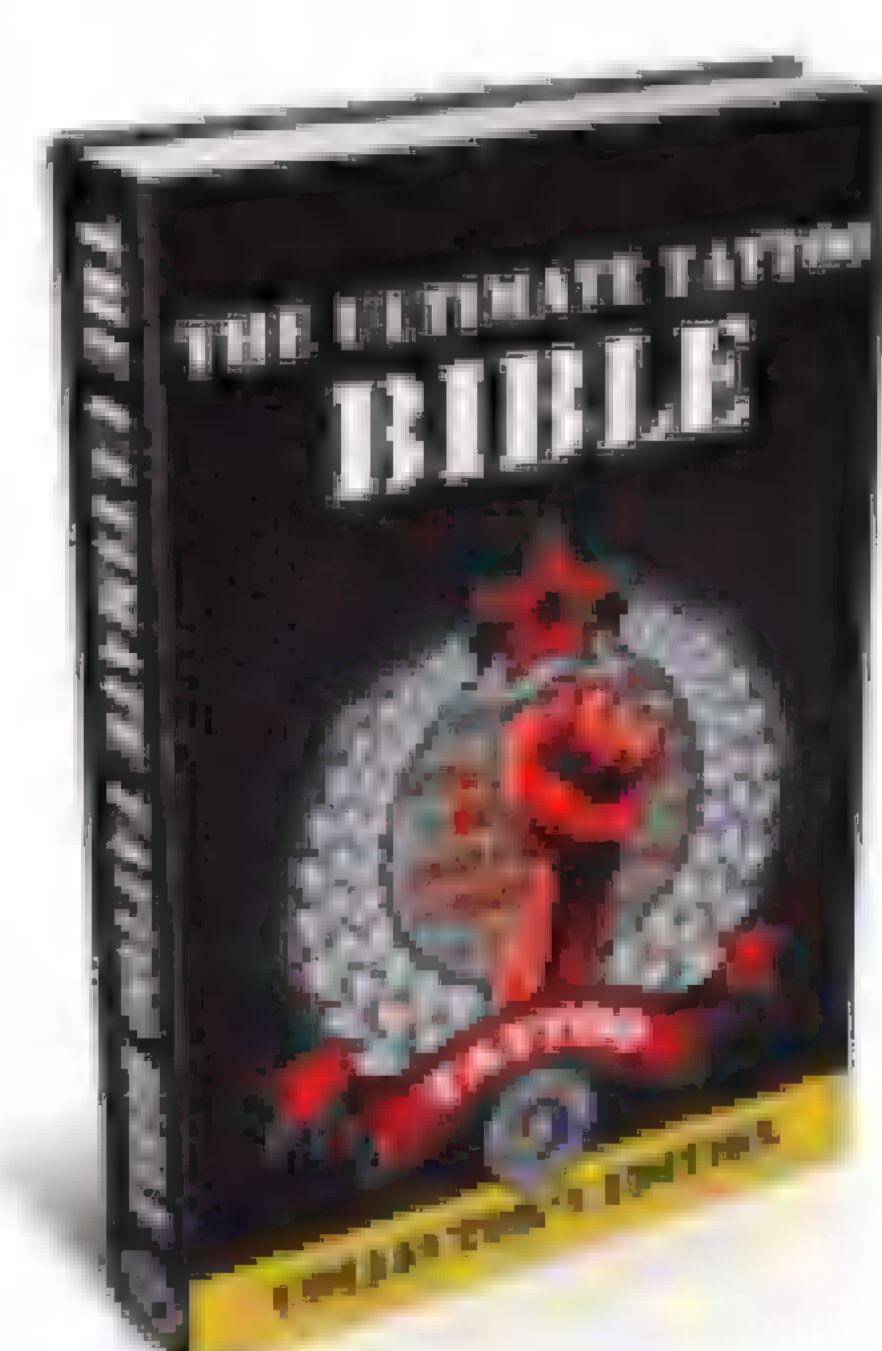
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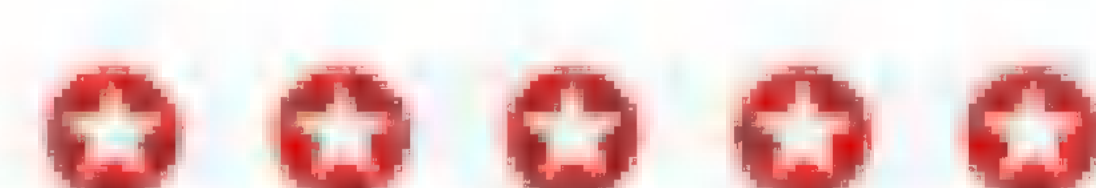


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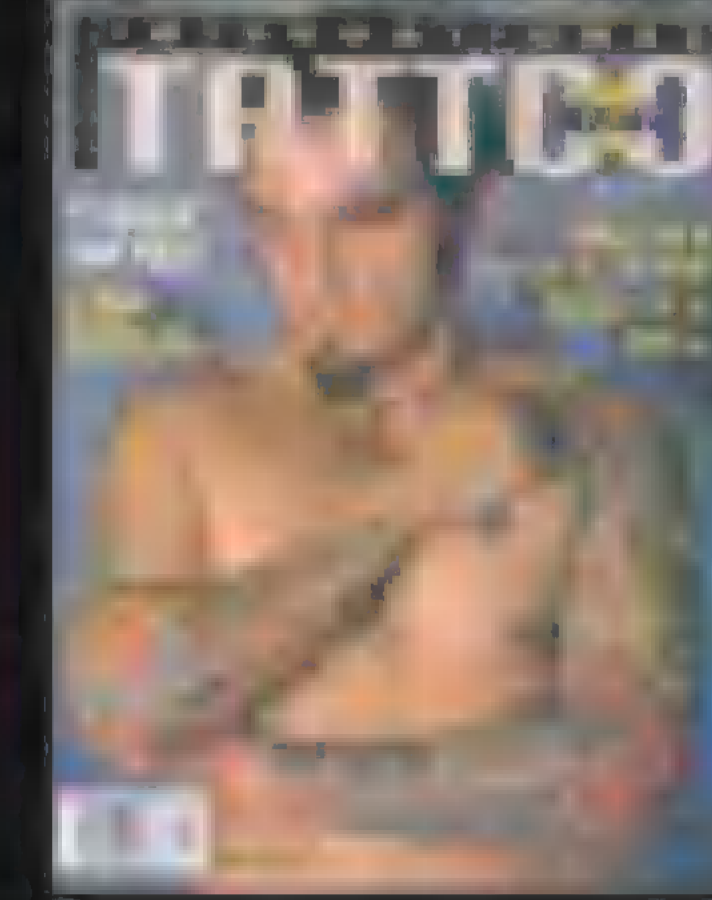
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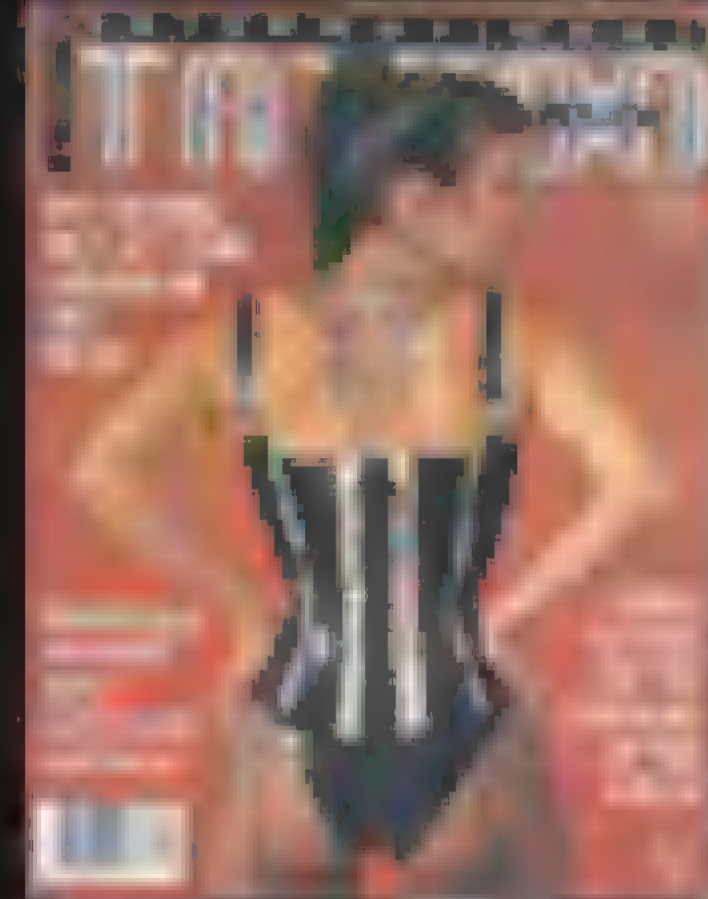
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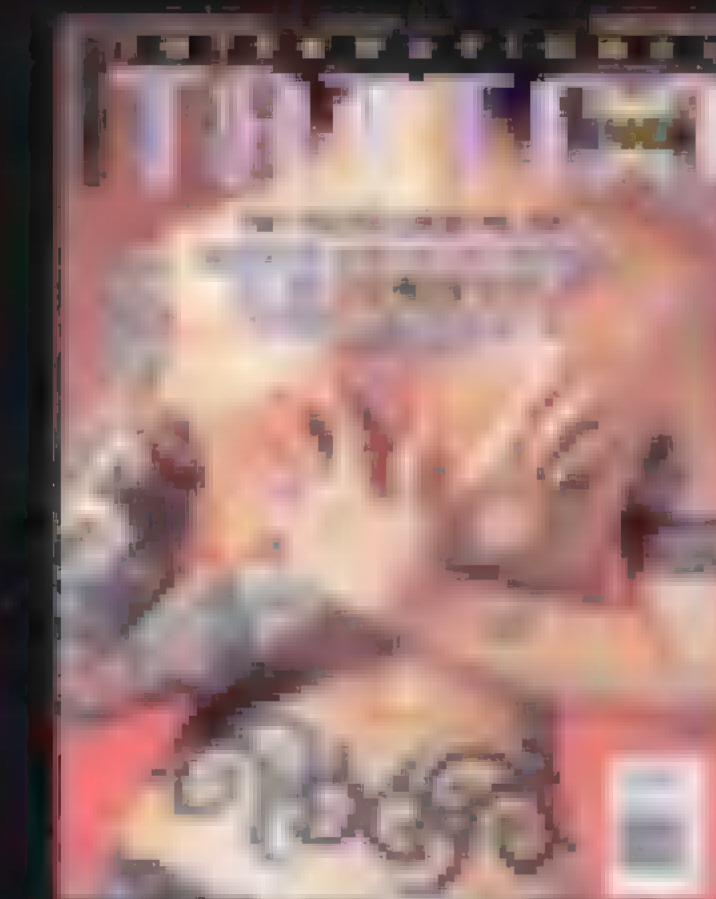
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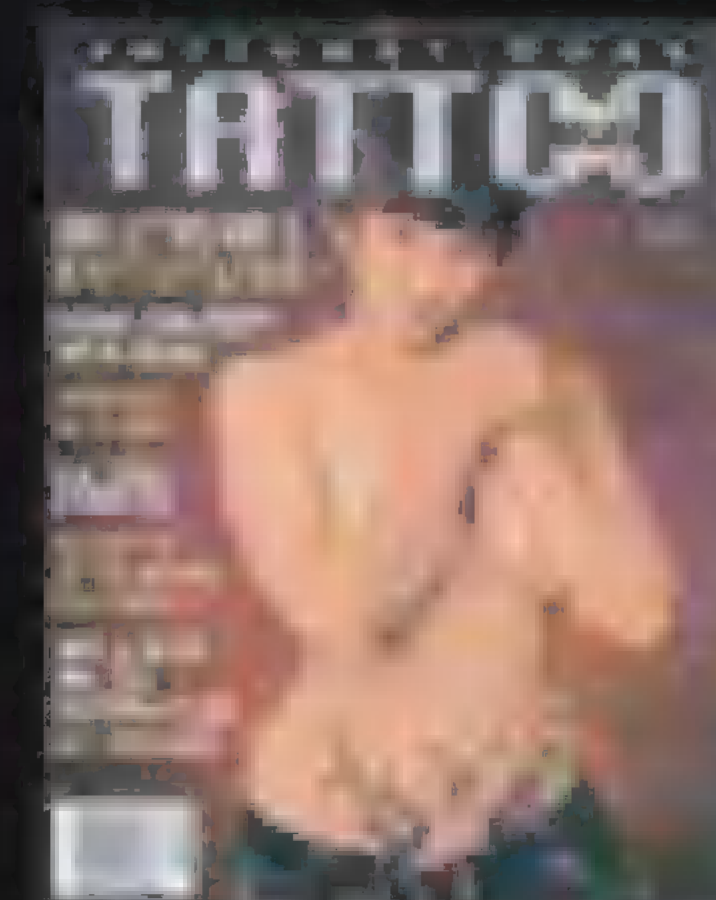
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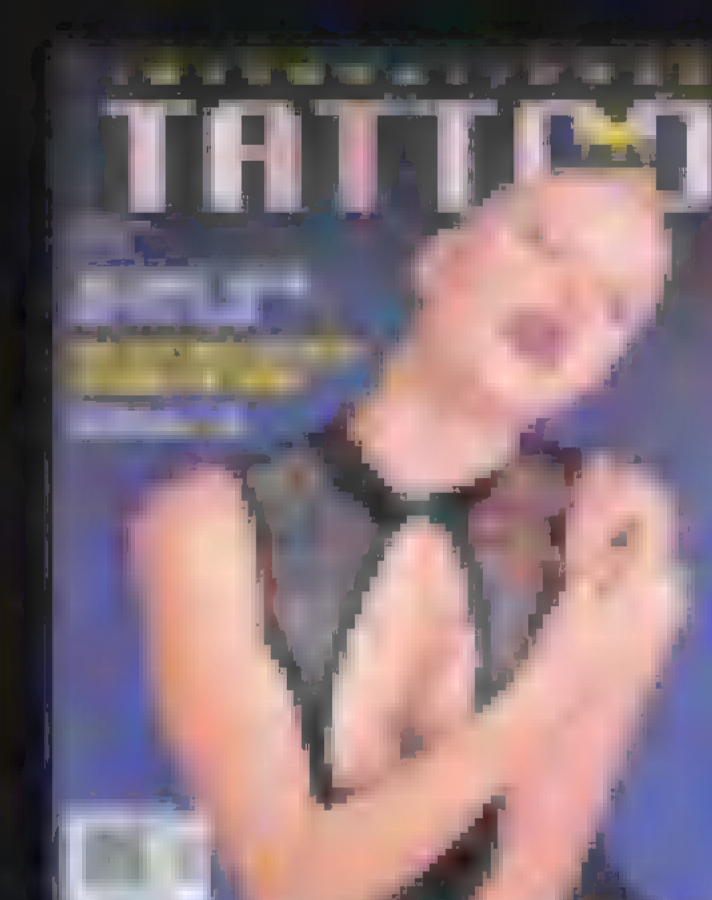
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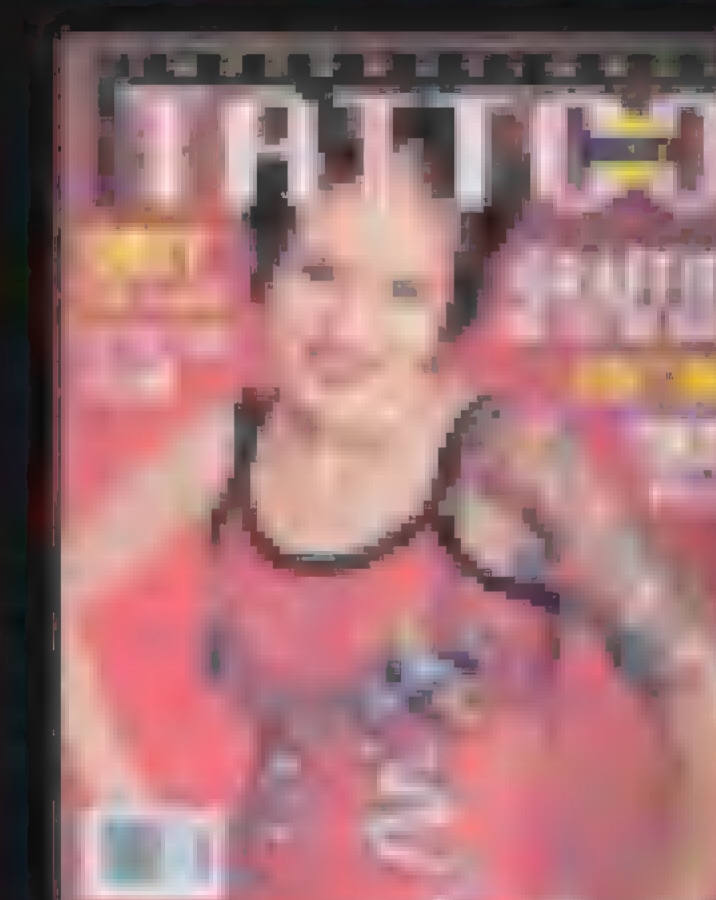
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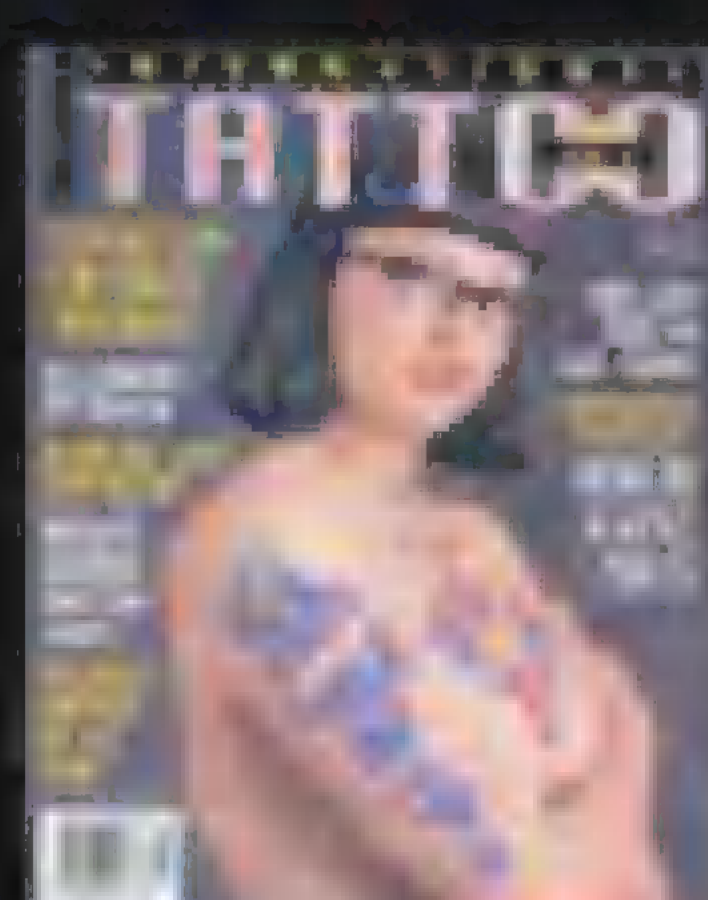
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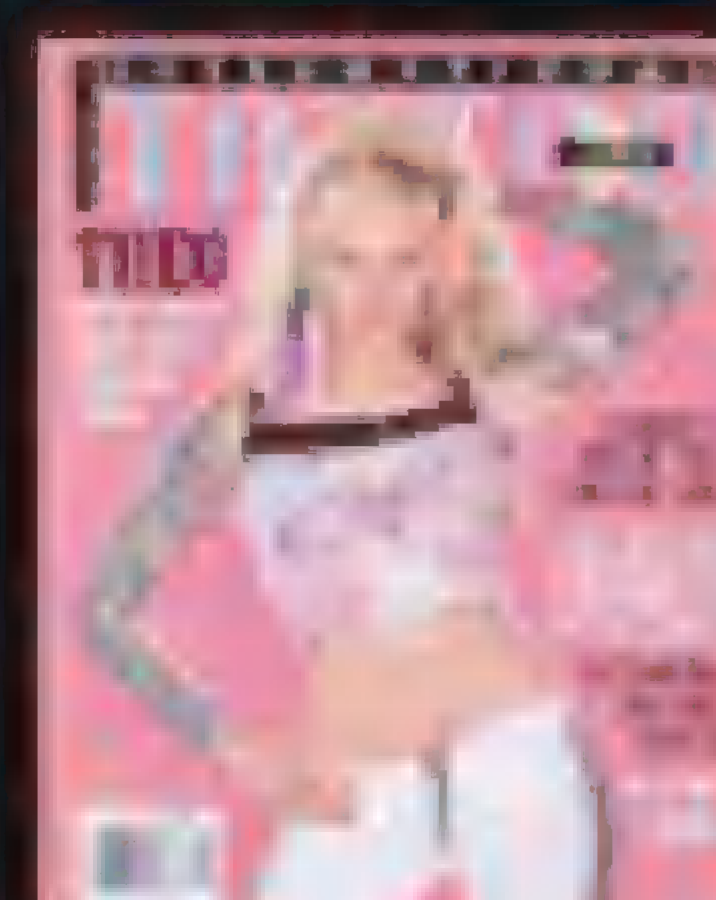
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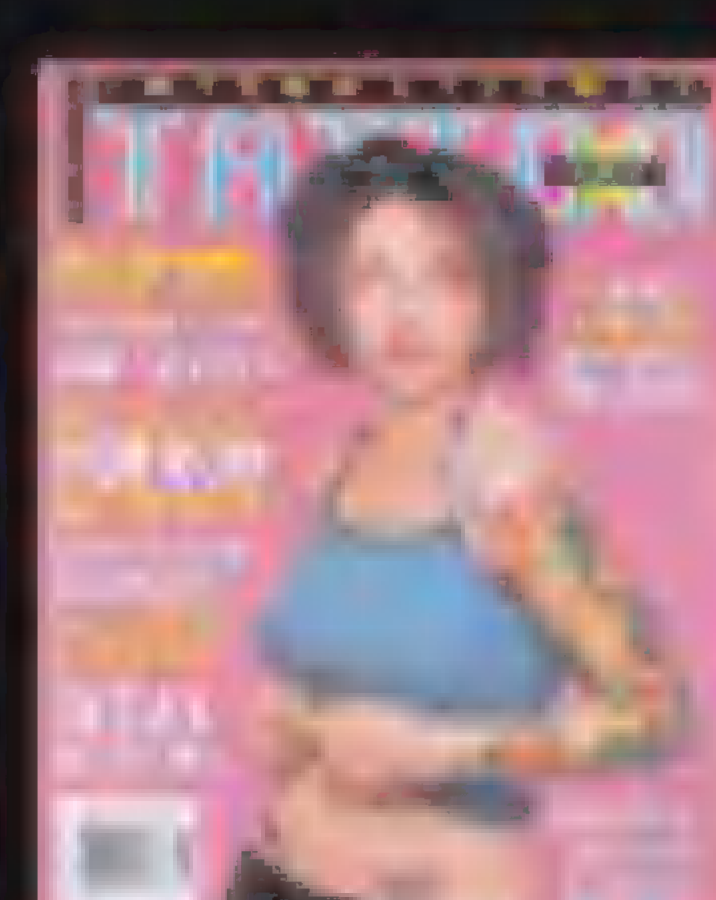
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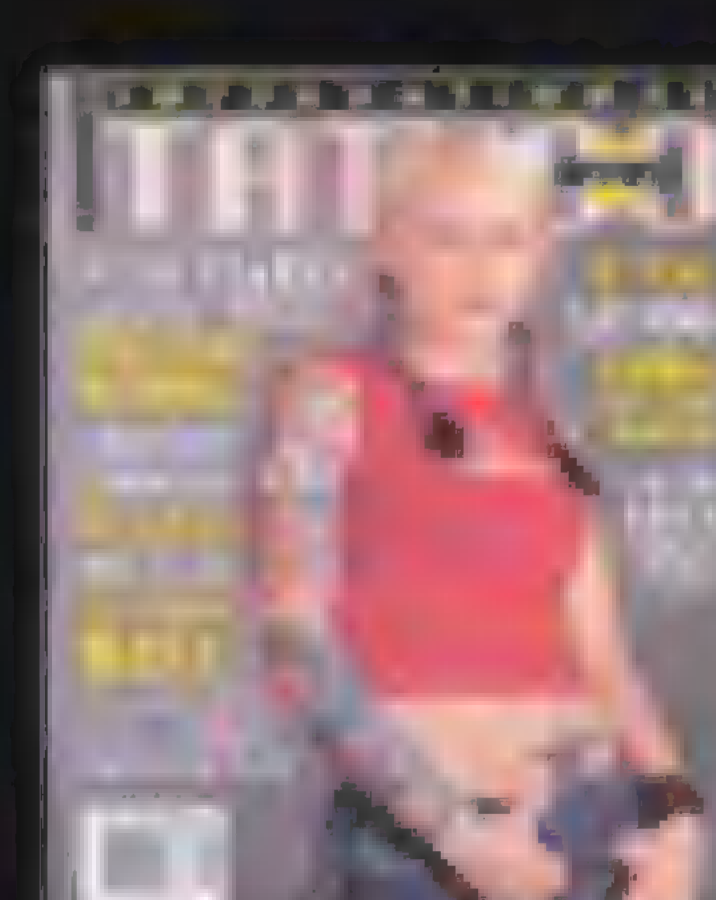
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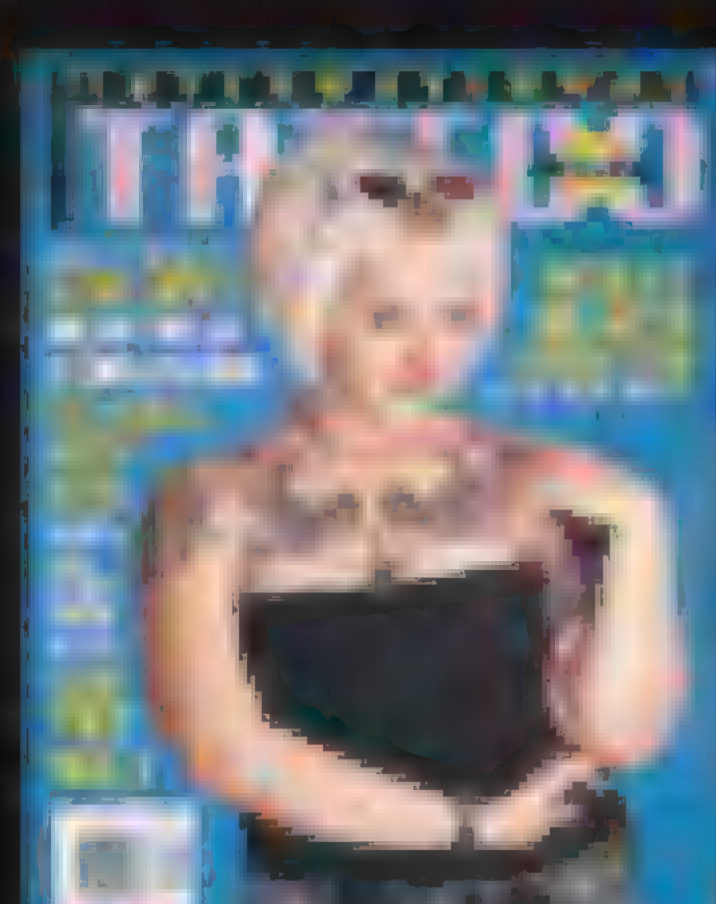
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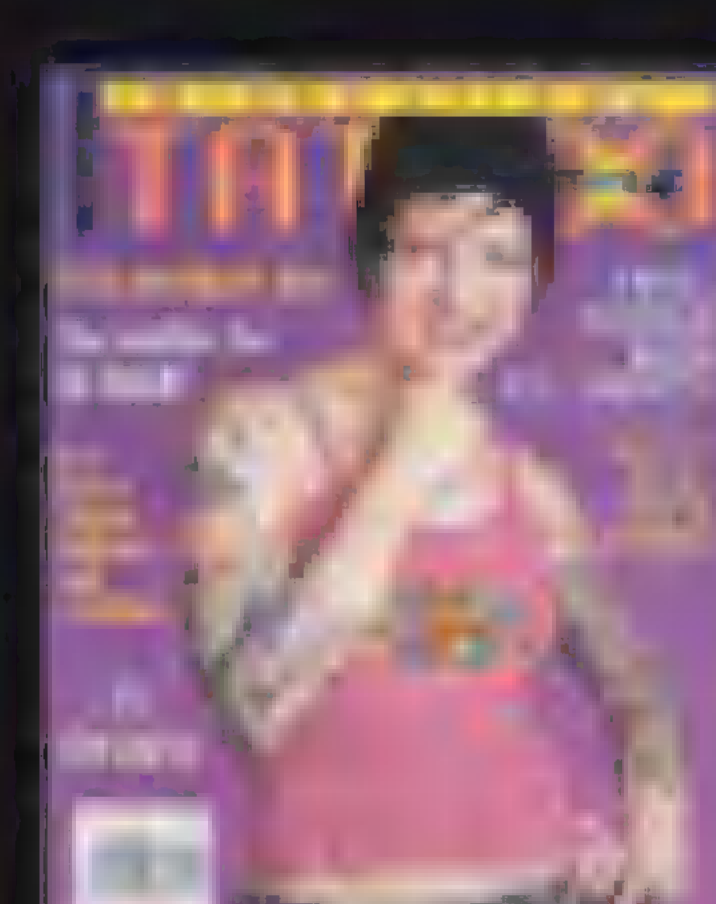
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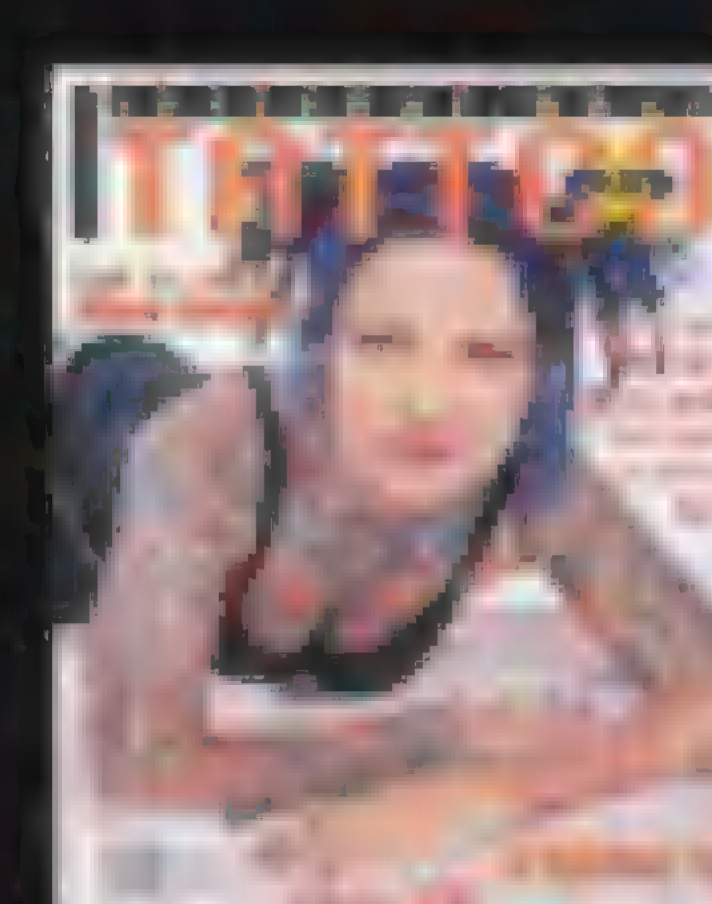
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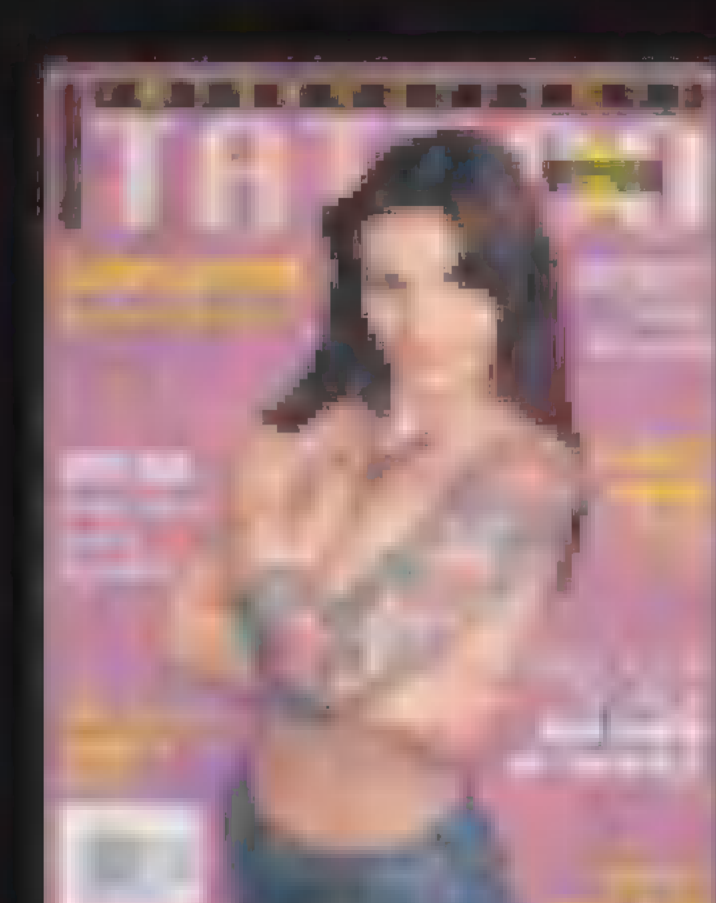
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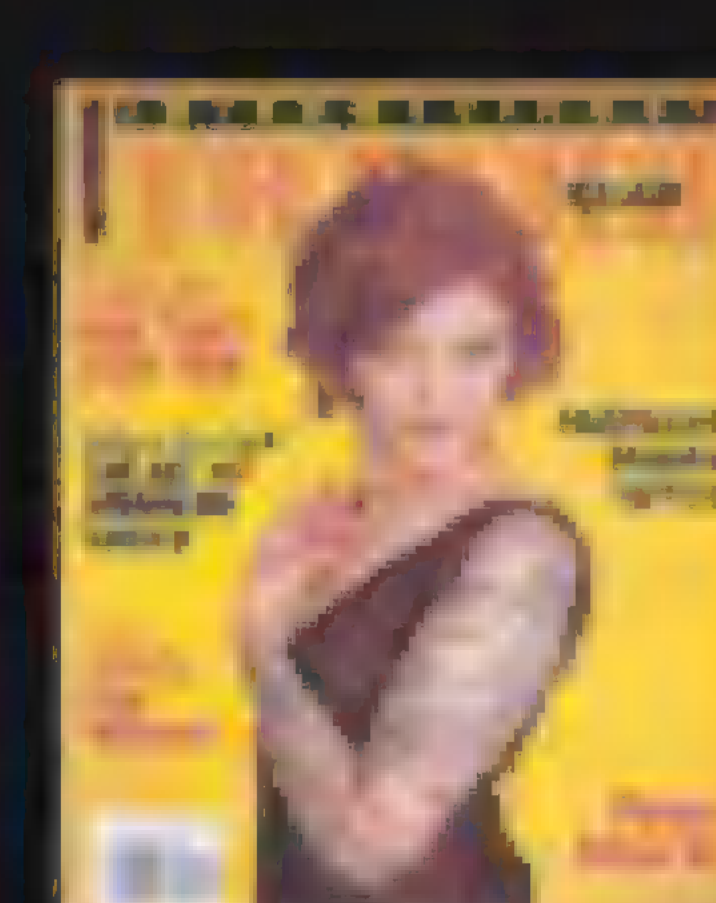
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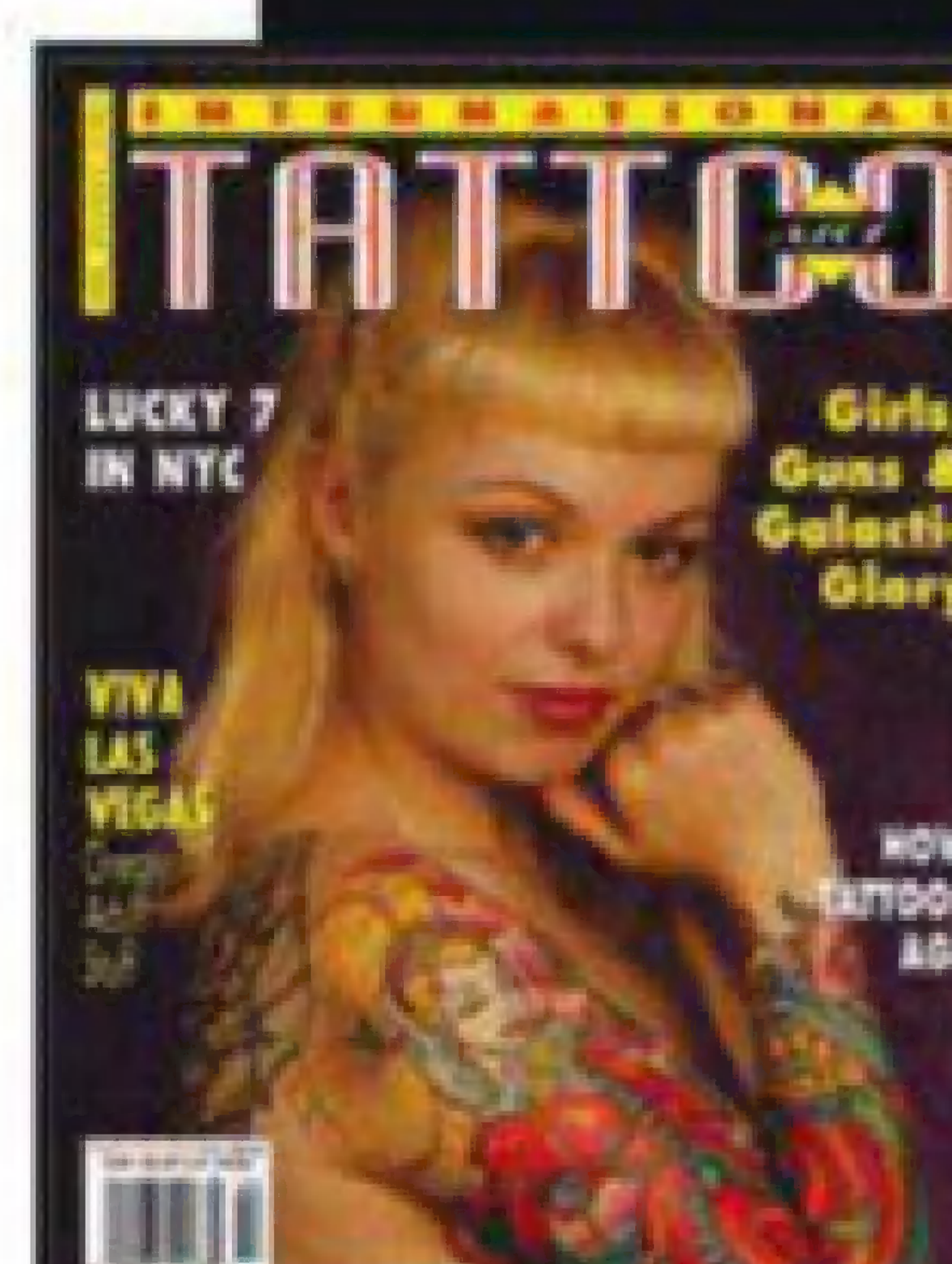
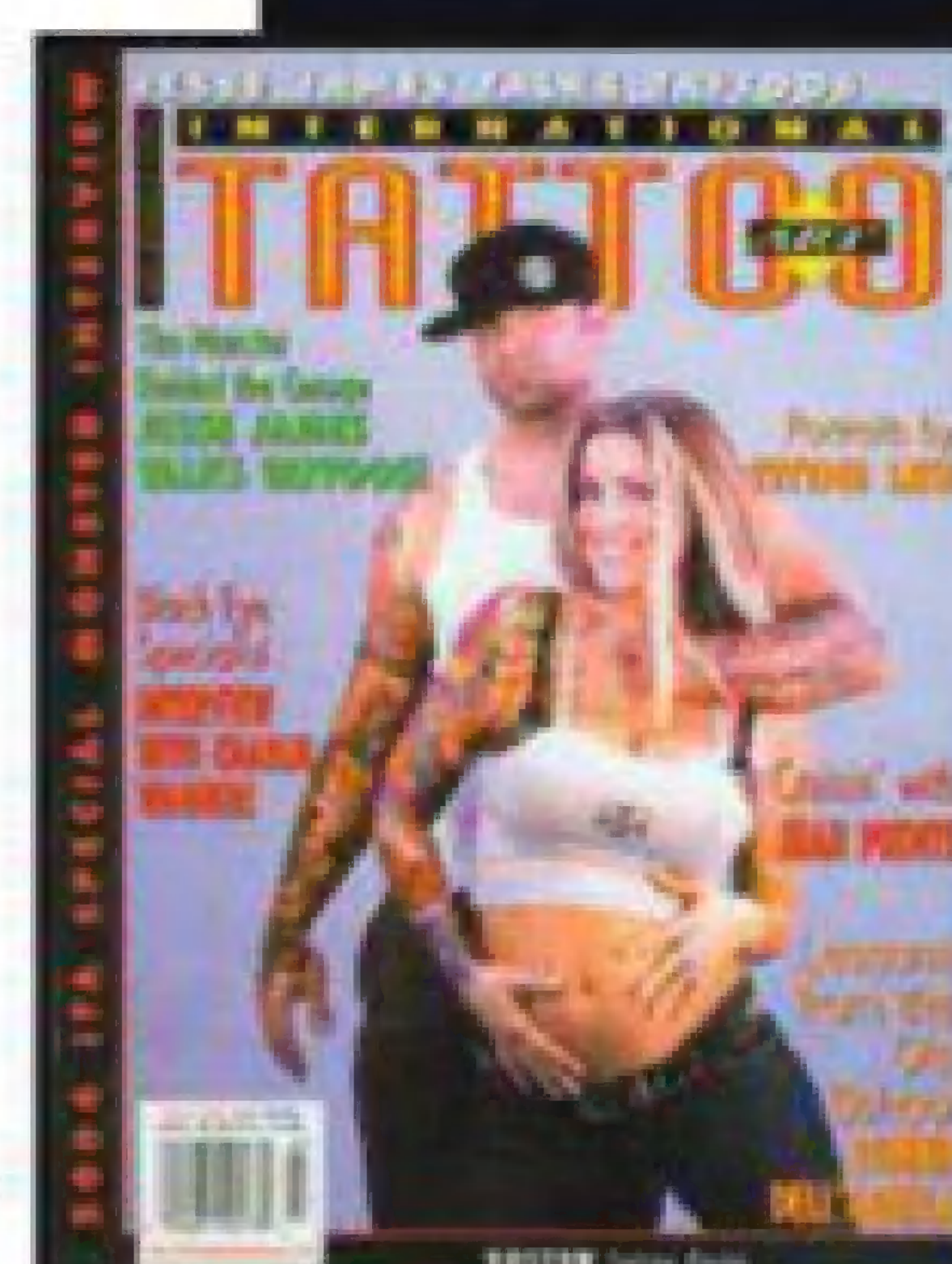
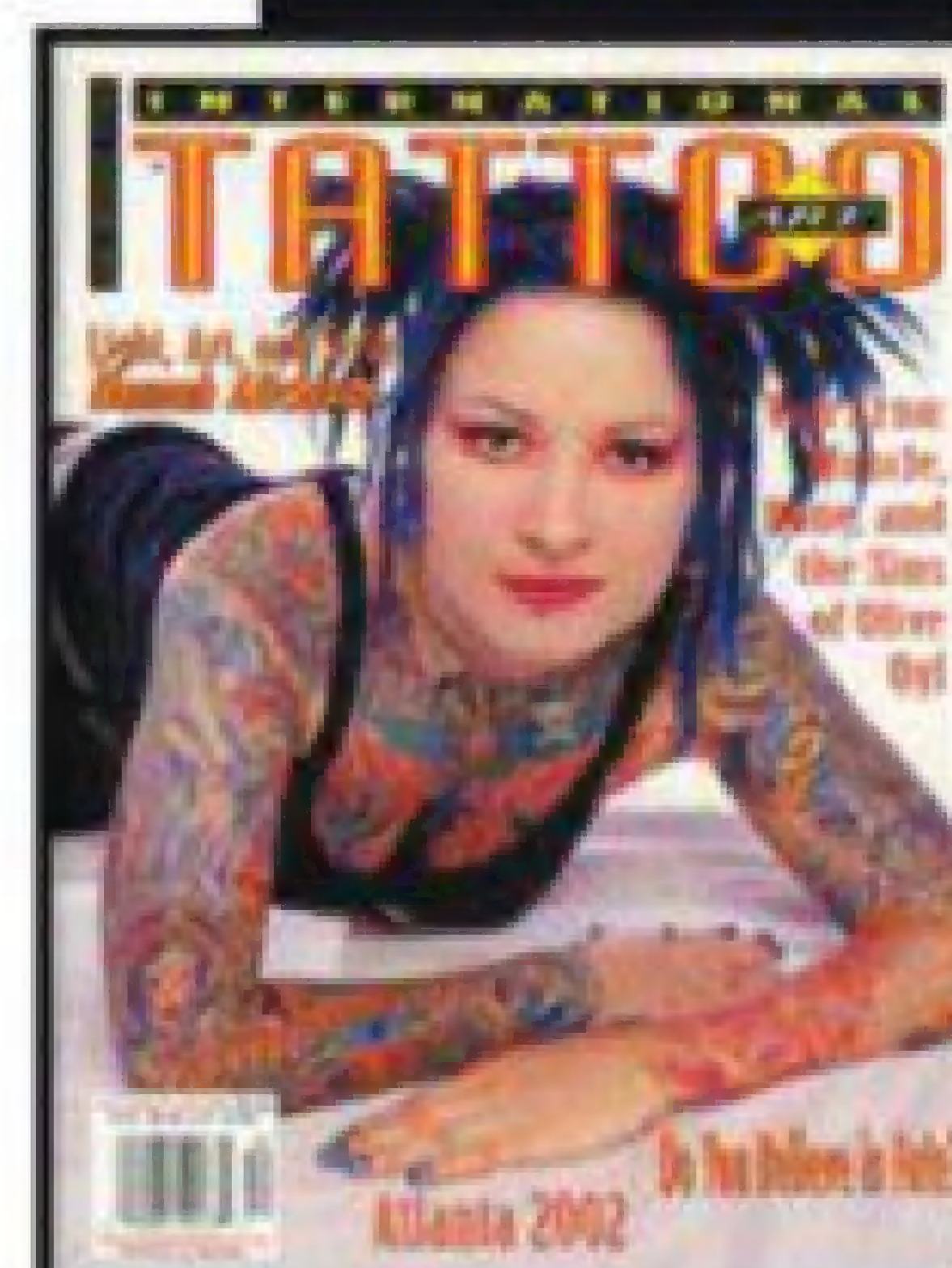
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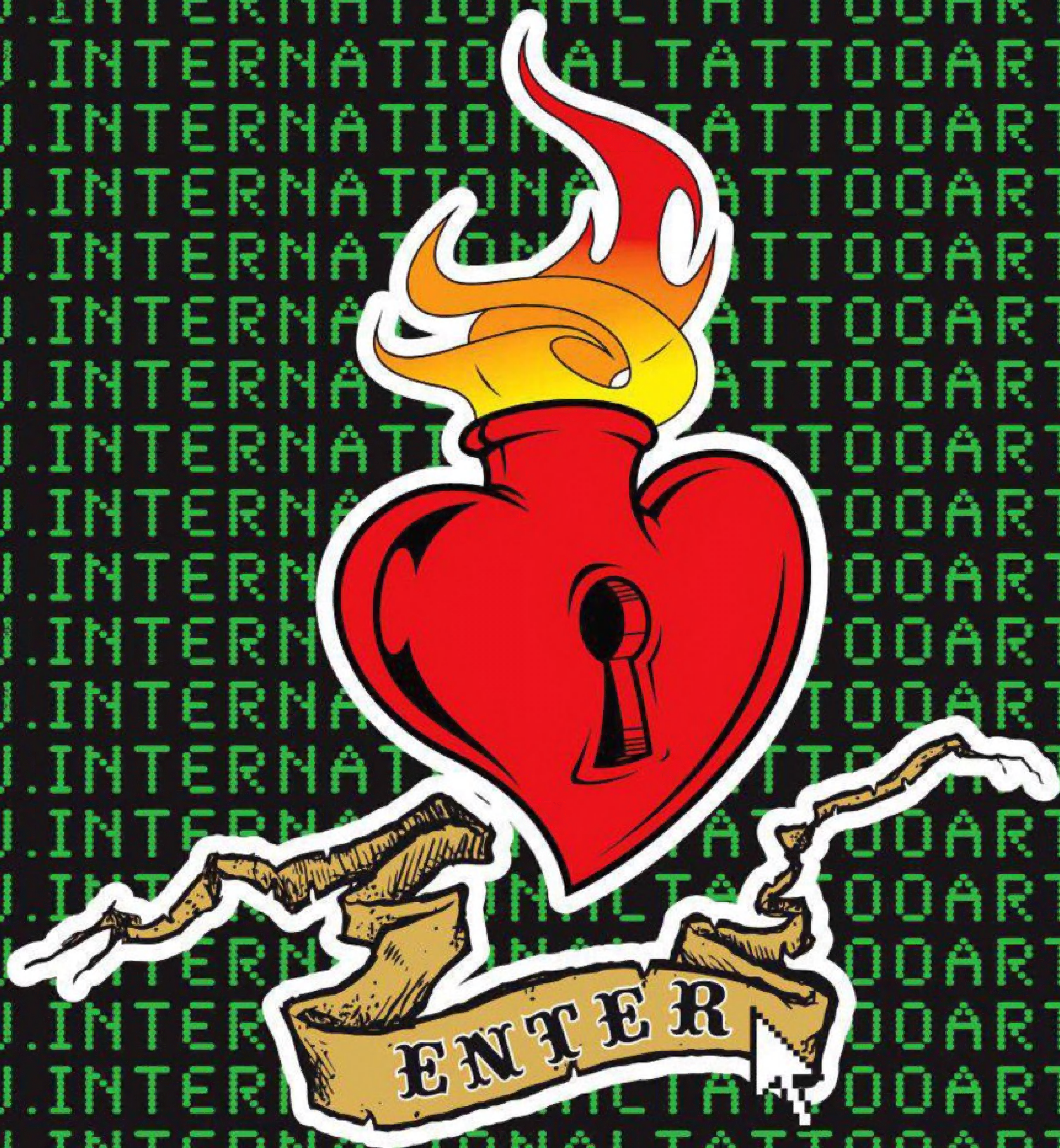
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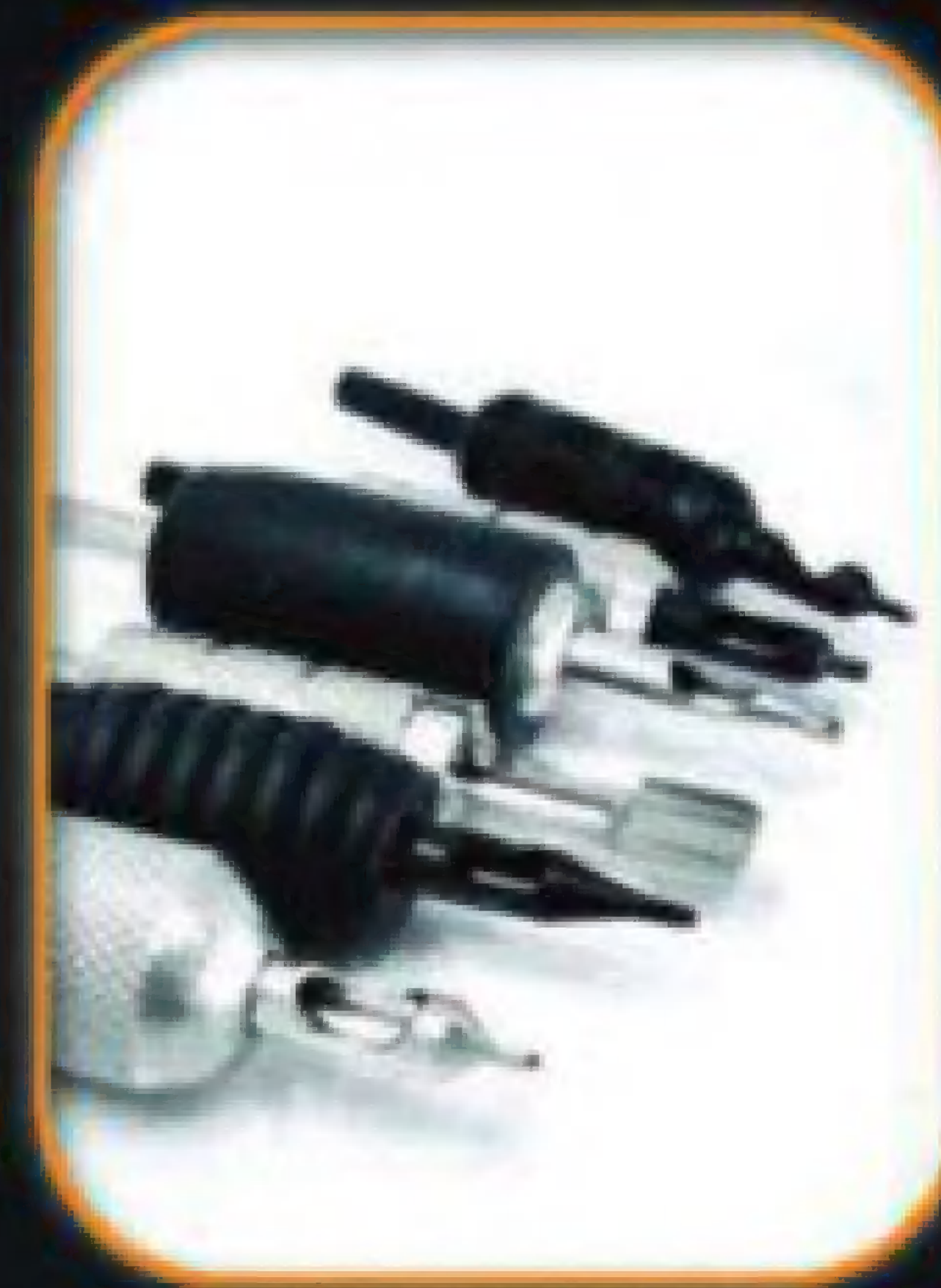
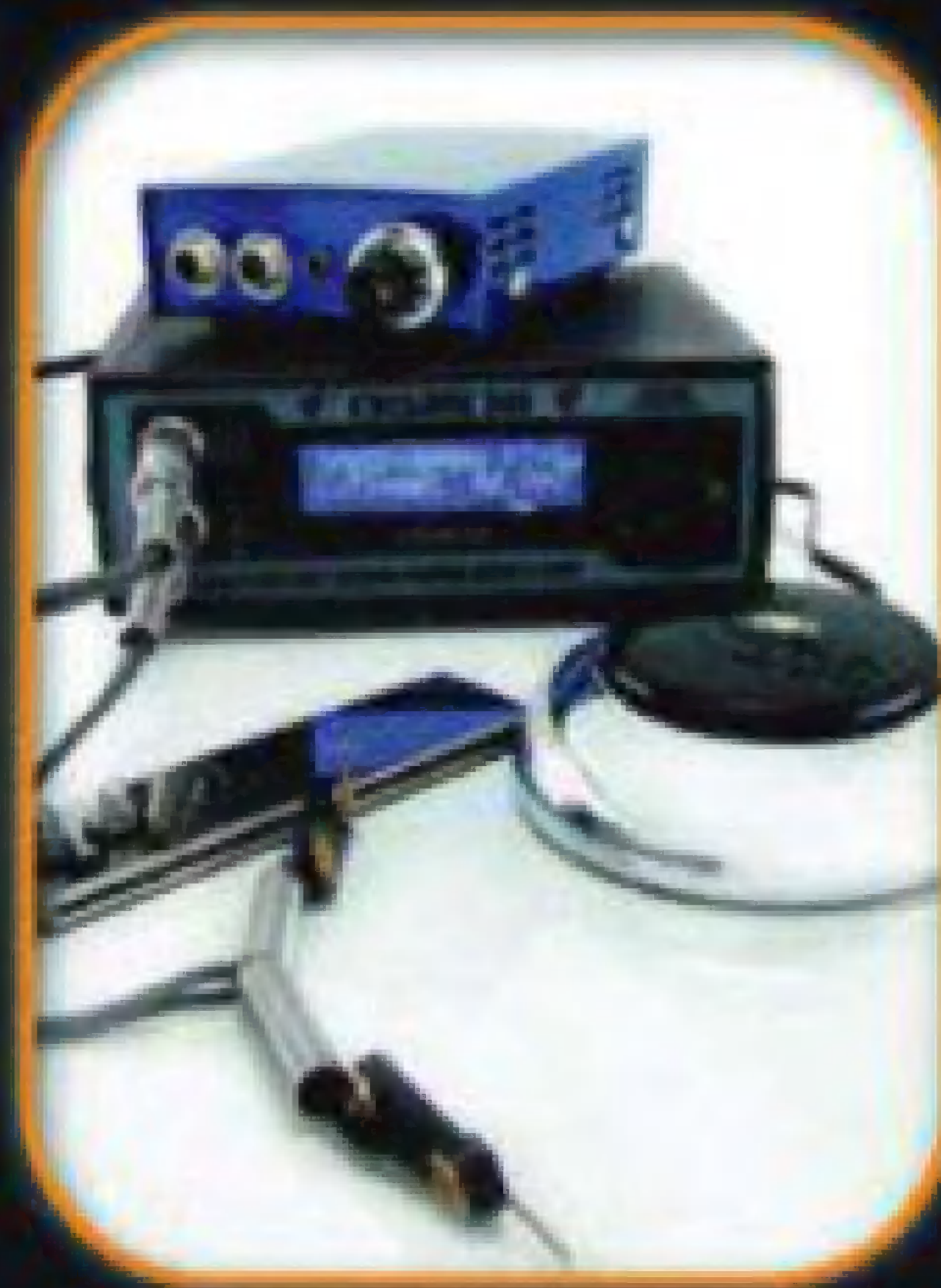


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